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LETTERS

DESCRIBING

The CHARACTER and CUSTOMS

OF THE

ENGLISH and *FRENCH* NATIONS.

With a curious ESSAY on

TRAVELLING.

And a Criticism on BOILEAU's Description of *PARIS.*

By Mr. MURALT, a Gentleman of *Switzerland.*

Quicquid agunt homines, noſtri farrago libelli. Juv.

The SECOND EDITION.

To which are now Added,

Critical REMARKS on the whole WORK, by Gentlemen of the *Engliſh* and *French* Nations, With a complete INDEX.

Tranſlated from the French.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by THO. EDLIN, at the *Prince's-Arms*, over-againſt *Exeter-Exchange*; and M. PREVOST, at the Sign of the *Ship*, over-againſt *Southampton-Street*, in the *Strand*. MDCCXXVI.

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The Tranſlator's

PREFACE.

THE *Author of the following Letters was ſo great a Lover of a private and retired Life, and ſo averſe to Pageantry and Shew, that there remains but little to entertain the Reader with, concerning his Name, or Perſon.*

He was of Switzerland, *and ſerv'd ſome Time in the late King of* France's *Armies. He afterwards quitted all publick Buſineſs, on a Principle of Conſcience, and was baniſh'd for cenſuring the Abuſes in Religious Ceremonies with which he could not comply; and now leads a ſolitary and auſtere Life.*

Theſe Letters have undergone as many Viciſſitudes of Fortune as their Author. The ſame Principle that induced him to abandon the Care of worldly Affairs, prompted him to burn all the Copies he could find: But, notwithſtanding his Diligence, ſome eſcap'd; and one of the Letters happening to be publiſh'd in Holland, *not long ſince, and it being advertis'd at the ſame Time, that others would ſoon be printed, and there being ſeveral counterfeit Letters handed about, under the Author's Name, his Friends made Uſe of that Opportunity to collect the whole, and to prevail with him, after two Years Importunity, to reviſe the Work; ſo that it is now as correct, eſpecially the Part relating to the* Engliſh, *as when it was firſt penn'd.*

Having now given the Reader a ſhort Hiſtory of the Author, and his Letters, it will be proper, in the next Place, to ſay ſomething of their Merit.

He appears, thro' the whole, to be a Perſon of a fine Taſte, his Wit is ſprightly and elegant, his Judgment ſolid, his Reaſoning ſtrong and perſuaſive, and his Erudition extenſive, without the leaſt Mixture of Pedantry, or Affectation.

The Letters on the Engliſh, *preſent us with a compleat Character of our Nation: Others have, indeed, given Hints of ſome of*

of our particular Virtues and Vices; but this Author has taken a Survey of the whole: He is not content with ſuperficial, or curſory Obſervations; he goes to the Bottom, and ſearches into the Phyſical as well as the Moral Cauſes of our Virtues and Vices, Inclinations and Paſſions, Laws and Cuſtoms: He points out the Ways of remedying our Defects and improving our Advantages; in a Word, all Ranks of People may find ſome Benefit by peruſing theſe Letters. The States-man will obſerve ſome of the groſſeſt Errors in our Conſtitution and Laws; the Virtuoſi will find Matter enough for new Speculations; the Clergy may improve by them, and the Nation in general may ſee ſome of their Defects, particularly their vain Boaſting, and Contempt of Strangers ſet in a clear Light, in order to Amendment.

He proceeds in drawing the Character of the French, *being the People he oppoſes to the* Engliſh *on moſt Occaſions; and nothing can be more beneficial to us than to have a true Idea of that Nation, either in Peace or in War: But I think it will be proper to obſerve in this Place, that the Letters on the* French *fall far ſhort of thoſe on the* Engliſh; *whether this Variation muſt be deduc'd from the different Periods of Youth and old Age, or a Change of Fortune, I cannot determine: The ſame*

Remark

Remark has been made on the Works of ſome of the moſt celebrated Authors; and the Learned are well appriz'd how much the Iliad *is ſuperior to the* Odyſſey *in all the Beauties of the Compoſition.*

He has, likewiſe, given us, at the Concluſion, ſome neceſſary Inſtructions for Travellers, which ought to be highly eſteem'd in an Age when Travels are look'd upon as one of the greateſt Accompliſhments of our Nobility and Gentry.

The Author of theſe Letters ſeem'd to be cut out for the Task he undertook. Beſides his great Abilities, of which I have taken Notice before, he was poſſeſs'd of another Qualification, which may be ſaid to be as it were the very Life, or as the Logicians have it, the Forma informans *of a Writer; that is Veracity: He keeps cloſe to it on all Occaſions, and makes it the Scope of every Thing he writes. There was, likewiſe, another Advantage on his Side; he was a Foreigner: People are ſeldom diſengag'd enough from Prepoſſeſſion, to ſee the Faults of their own Nation; for which Reaſon that Task ought always to be reſerv'd for others.*

Having now endeavour'd to ſhew our Author on the beſt Side, it will be Juſtice to take ſome Notice of his Defects: But I muſt obſerve, that the Genius of the French *Language, and Manner of writing differ much*

much from the Engliſh; *and this may, perhaps, be thought to be a ſufficient Apology for him; and there is no doubt but a great many Paſſages, which are cry'd up in* French *Authors, would make a very indifferent Figure in our Language. But, without enlarging any more on this Topick, the Author is ſometimes very obſcure and metaphyſical, and handles ſome Subjects with too much Delicacy, at leaſt for an* Engliſh *Taſte; and it is odd to ſee him fall into theſe Errors, in regard he often cenſures them in other Authors.*

Here it may not be improper to obſerve, that as ſome of theſe Letters were wrote above thirty Years ſince, the Reader muſt not be ſurpriz'd at the Variation between the Cuſtoms and Ways of thoſe Times, (which the Author ſometimes takes Notice of,) and thoſe in our Generations, nor at ſome Miſtakes which he may have fallen into, with regard to our Laws and Conſtitution; for ſuch may well happen to a Foreigner, notwithſtanding the moſt diligent Inquiries.

As for the Tranſlation, it has been a Work of no ſmall Difficulty; which I am perſuaded will be readily acknowledg'd by thoſe who are skill'd in the French. *Compoſitions of Wit ſeldom aſſume a foreign Dreſs without conſiderable Loſs; and as the* French *Language has a greater Store of Phraſes and ſignificant Terms than any Living Langua-*

ges

ges whatever, and the Engliſh *but few to correſpond with them, it is not eaſy to imagine what a Task a Tranſlator has to undergo. I have endeavour'd, on all Occaſions, to keep cloſe to the Author's Senſe, that being the eſſential Part of every Verſion: But whatever Fate this may have, I flatter myſelf it would make a tolerable Figure in an Age leſs fertile in Criticks than the preſent.*

As for the Criticiſm *on* Boileau's *Sixth Satyr, I once thought of omitting it in this Edition, as turning chiefly on* French *Terms, and conſequently of little or no Uſe to an* Engliſh *Reader. But, unwilling any Performance of this notable Gentleman's ſhould be loſt to the Publick, I at length determin'd to print the Original, together with as intelligible a Verſion of it as I could make, for the Satisfaction of the mere* Engliſh *Purchaſer. My Author's curious* Criticiſm, *as may well be ſuppos'd, loſes in the* Engliſh *the far greateſt Part of its native Tartneſs. I ſhall not go about to interfere as to the Juſtneſs of it: That I leave to others; and ſhall only ſay, that our judicious* Swiſs *has made a good Choice; for, in my Opinion, of all* Boileau's *Works, this Satyr of his is what would beſt bear being criticis'd upon. In the* French *this Letter is the laſt but one; and to avoid an unſeemly Mixture I have tranſpos'd it, and it now cloſes the whole.*

LETTERS

LETTERS

Concerning the

Engliſh Nation, *&c.*

LETTER I.

SIR,

I Am reſolved, during my ſtay in *England*, to give you ſome Account of the Manners and Character of the People, not only to amuſe you, but with a ſerious intention of drawing ſuch a Portrait as may give you a juſt Idea of the Nation. I'll inform you of all that comes to my Knowledge, but without travelling far to make Obſervations; and that with Exactneſs, according to the beſt of my Judgment, both of us may however be

ſometimes miſtaken. In a word, Truth ſhall be my chief Aim in every thing I write, but I cannot take upon me to ſay that I ſhall always meet with her; and it would, in my Opinion, be Raſhneſs to promiſe it. The ways whereby the *Engliſh* are chiefly known in the World are the very ſame that make them remarkable when we are with them, that is, by Proſperity, the Magnificence of the Great, and the Plenty among the common People. 'Tis eaſy to obſerve at the ſame time the uſual Effects of Happineſs; Corruption, and a kind of Pride, call'd Inſolence among thoſe that ſuffer by it. Corruption is come to ſuch a heighth in *England*, that it appears barefaced. I have ſometimes heard People impute it to King CHARLES II. who is reported to have given continual Examples of Exceſs and Debauchery; but, in my Opinion, the *Engliſh* don't ſtand in need of any extraordinary Precedents, to make them what they are: Generally ſpeaking, they have little Education, a great deal of Money to laviſh, and all poſſible Incentives to Vice; ſo that we may well expect to find a great number of diſſolute People among them. It muſt likewiſe be obſerv'd that *England* is a Country of Liberty, every one lives there as he wiſhes; which, no doubt, is the Source of the many extraordinary Characters among them, Heroes in Evil as well as in Good. It likewiſe gives them a Freedom of Thoughts and Sentiments, which does not a little contribute to their good Senſe, wherein they are diſtinguiſh'd, generally ſpeaking, from moſt other Nations.

Their Pride, (or, if I dare make uſe of the uſual Term) their Inſolence, is neither ſo extravagant nor general as People imagine. Their little Regard for the Grandees, with their Unwillingneſs

willingneſs to yield them any Superiority, as is uſual in other Countries, may by ſome be imputed to Pride; but it never exerts itſelf more than in ſuch things as tend to Liberty, and in their violent manner of enjoying ſome Pleaſures. I have not remark'd any Inſolence among them to Strangers, at leaſt in the common Affairs of Life; ſo that I cannot ſee any Reaſon for diſtinguiſhing them from other Nations, on that Score; and generally ſpeaking, their Ways are far from being either ſo harſh or diſagreeable to us as moſt People imagine. They do not trouble themſelves much about us, when they don't know us; and when they do, they make us ſenſible ſometimes *that they love themſelves beſt:* That is enough. They are ſtrongly prepoſſeſs'd in Favour of their *own* Nation; this influences all their Diſcourſe and Ways, and affords matter of Complaint to Strangers: And perhaps the Folly of the greateſt Part of the World may be imputed to the ſame Error; but in regard People ſtand in need of one another's Aſſiſtance, it is generally conceal'd for the Benefit of the Society. The *Engliſh* are no way bridled by any Conſideration of that Kind; being rich enough to live within themſelves, and ſeparated by Sea from the reſt of the World, they are above Reſtraint, wherein the *French* ought to be diſpenſed with on ſome Occaſions, ſince the *Engliſh* never practiſe it on any. Beſides their great Wealth and Contempt of Strangers, I think the Bravery of the Men, and Beauty of the Woman, may be added to the ordinary Character of the Nation: I will give you my Opinion on that Head. Their Bravery is univerſally eſtabliſh'd with good Reaſon: They give convincing Proofs of it in deſpiſing Death; yet few of them hunt after War in foreign Countries, for the ſame

Reaſon, perhaps, that few go to Court: It is becauſe they have Wealth and good Senſe. They neither go to War, nor much eſteem thoſe who do. The Title of *Captain* is very inſignificant among them; every idle Fellow, who is a Stranger, provided he has a Sword on, they honour him with that Title, as in *France* every trifling Fellow, who wears the Cloak and little Band, bears the Title of *Abbé*. Their Bravery is no leſs conſpicuous in Duels; but ſuch Kind of Combats are not much heard of; yet when they happen, the Parties behave themſelves well. In my Opinion, true Courage (the Want of which has introduced theſe new Ways among Men) is to be found here; that is, Reſolution to purſue Reaſon againſt Cuſtom, in order to any good Action: Here are great Numbers of ſuch brave Men, as you will obſerve by ſeveral Paſſages with which I ſhall have an Opportunity of acquainting you on this Head.

The common People are as little ſolicitous after the great Men as they are after the Court; it would ſeem as if they were neither fear'd nor admir'd, as in other Countries. On the contrary, one may obſerve a Spirit of Liberty which is countenanced by the Government: And if all I have heard of be true, it is in *England* that a Man is Maſter of his own, without the Oppreſſions of the Great, or ever knowing them, if he thinks fit: They are only conſider'd in Proportion to the Good they do; if they do much, as it often happens, then they become truly great Lords, by their numerous Levies, the Complaiſance and Eſteem of the People, and are like little Kings, in their Country Houſes. If they do but little Good, they are left to themſelves, to enjoy their Prerogatives in Sadneſs, and their Condition is pretty near what one of them has acknowledg'd

it

it to be, on a certain Occaſion. "We can't "(ſays he) be arreſted for Debt, for which Rea- "ſon we can have no Credit; in lieu of an Oath, "we are obliged to ſwear only on our Honour, "but then few believes us; there's a Law to "prevent People from ſpeaking ill of us, but "we, as well as others, are ſometimes baſtina- "doed in the Streets." He might have added, that their Birth gives them Seats in Parliament, but that their Houſe does not rule all: You know 'tis the lower that has the greateſt Share in the Determination of all important Affairs. Give me leave to ſay ſomething of it.

'Tis partly by the Care of the Houſe of Commons, that *England* has preſerv'd her Liberty under a Kingly Government, which no doubt is ſufficient to gain them the greateſt Eſteem, nor is it well poſſible to conceive too high an Idea of that Houſe; 'tis however eaſy in other Reſpects to fall into an Error on this Topick. In a Country of good Senſe one might well expect to find a great many Men of Abilities, in a Meeting of four or five hundred, choſe from among all the reſt; but it happens otherwiſe, to judge of them at leaſt by their Deliberations and long Debates upon ſmall Affairs. Thus it happens here, as it commonly does in numerous Aſſemblies, ſome of the moſt underſtanding, or the boldeſt, ſet up for Chiefs, and lead the reſt: There's likewiſe found among the laſt, ſome that are tired with being led, and ſo reſolve to go alone, and even venture to make Speeches; 'tis then we are to expect Miracles. In the Year 1693, one of theſe wiſe Senators concluded his Harangue with ſay- ing, that he hoped, before the end of the Year, to ſee the King of *France* preſent himſelf at the

Bar of the Houſe, and beg for Peace from the Parliament on his Knees.

In other Reſpects the (a) Nobles that compoſe the lower Houſe, ſeem to be the happieſt People in the World: By this Order of Nobility I would have that called Gentry underſtood, but the title of Noble does not entirely ſquare with them, according to the common Idea, nor their way of living, with that of the Nobility in other Countries. They are a rich People, whoſe Birth no way ſubjects them to any Nicety, or troubleſome Punctilio, ſo that they may follow any kind of Buſineſs, in caſe of Need: That indeed makes them Mechanicks, but on the other hand, Debauchery and Hunting are their uſual Employments, where they behave themſelves as much like Gentlemen as on other Occaſions. As for the Exerciſes of riding the great Horſe, dancing, and fencing, they quite neglect them; as well as ſome genteel and polite ways, which in other Countries are found only among the Nobles. But what I have ſaid muſt be underſtood chiefly of young People that have not travelled, and is not ſo generally true, but that it may admit of ſome Exceptions, which often happens in general Characters of Nations.

Let us now go on to the Clergy.

'Tis ſurprizing to obſerve at firſt View the Air of Health and Proſperity of the greateſt Part of them; and it is pleaſant to ſee how fat and fair theſe Parſons are. They are charged with being ſomewhat lazy, and their uſual *Plumpneſs* makes it ſuſpected that there's ſome Truth in it. It is common to ſee them in Coffee-

(a) *The* French *divide their Nobility into high and low, the firſt agrees with the* Engliſh *Peers, and the other with the Gentry.*

Coffee-Houſes, and even in Taverns, with Pipes in their Mouths. This would, no doubt, at firſt give ſome Offence to a Stranger; but as 'tis the Cuſtom of the Country, and none thinking it ſcandalous, there's no more notice taken of them in thoſe Places than of others. There's one thing which they have in common with the Clergy of other Nations, that their Sermons are more reſpected than their Perſons. Beſides the Shortneſs of their Diſcourſes, which renders them preferable to ours, they read them in lieu of repeating by heart; or to ſpeak more properly, in pronouncing they caſt their Eyes from Time to Time on their Notes to help them out; and I am perſuaded their way would not diſpleaſe you; it not only prevents the violent Action of a Declaimer, the counterfeit Paſſions, and outragious Geſticulations, which are no way agreeable to the Dignity of Religion, but what is no leſs important, it enables them to give force to their Sermons, without loſing any thing in getting them by heart; ſo that one does not hear any idle Stories, hardly worth writing, and which could not be read without an ill Grace. It would ſeem as if they deſign'd to reform Mankind in good Earneſt, and their Sermons, by powerful reaſoning, tend to make Men ſociable and virtuous; but tho' they ſhould fail of Succeſs, they give no Occaſion, at leaſt, by long and inſipid Harangues, to ſome to laugh at the Preacher, and to others to laugh at Religion.

I have ſometimes conſider'd the Difference between the *Engliſh* Preachers and others, the *French* for Example; the firſt goes into the Pulpit with an Air of Modeſty and Fear, and one might ſay he is afraid of looking on the Audience; the Tone of his Voice is ſedate, his Reaſoning ſhort

and natural, and abounds with good Senſe. The other, on the contrary, ſeems to be mounting a Throne, and in getting up, one may perceive him to ſwell with Eccleſiaſtick Pride; he begins with turning his Head on all Sides, and looking arrogantly on his Hearers, as if he would inſpire them with Reſpect for his Perſon, his Diſcourſe is long and tireſome, full of Fancies and Flowers of Rhetorick, he lays about him furiouſly, and cries out like a Man unprovided with good Reaſons to perſuade, or Dignity to give Weight to what he advances.

I muſt not forget to tell you, that the *Engliſh* have been very ſucceſsful in promoting the Sciences, and that they have a great number of good Writers on moſt Subjects. But this is no way ſurprizing, they are ſenſible of their own Freedom, and live at their Eaſe, they love to make uſe of their Reaſon, and neglect any Politeneſs or Behaviour in Diſcourſe that renders Wit little or mean. In a word, their Language is rich and perſpicuous, ſcarcely admitting any thing that is trifling. Be it as it will, they pretend to have had the Start of other Nations in the Advancement of Learning, for a whole Century at leaſt. This is a Pretenſion ſo like to diſturb *Parnaſſus*, and to ſtir up Diſputes in the angry Commonwealth of the Learned, that while I am ſpeaking, methinks I hear the Charge ſounded, and the *Literati* running to Arms. The *Engliſh* pretend likewiſe to more Wit, or Wit of a better Allay than the reſt of the World; which may be true ſo far, that there are ſome of them that think with more Force, and have more bold Thoughts than the Men of Wit in other Nations. But in my Opinion they are neither delicate nor natural, and I am perſuaded you'll find their Works

Works over-charg'd with Thoughts. But I ſhall have Occaſion hereafter to examine this Affair more particularly. Now for the Merchants.

They ſeem to me to differ from other Merchants in many Things; they are neither in ſo much haſte as the *French* to grow rich, nor ſo niggardly as the *Dutch* to ſave; their Houſes are richly furniſhed, and their Tables well ſerved; none can out-do a Merchant in good eating, if he makes it his Buſineſs, and 'tis, no doubt, this ſumptuous way of living that obliges them to ſell their Goods at dear Rates, for being accuſtom'd to great Expences, they deſpiſe ſmall Gain. There's ſomething very ſingular in their Character, and which, in my Opinion, diſtinguiſhes them ſtill more from other Merchants; no ſooner do they acquire Wealth, but they quit Traffick, and turn Country Gentlemen; ſo that ſome of them know when to ſtop, and to enjoy the Fruits of their Labour. There muſt be a great Number of ſuch Gentlemen, for a Book has been lately printed, in which the Author, who is a Merchant, charges them with weakening Trade.

The *Engliſh* Mechanicks have acquired a great deal of Reputation in the World, and in many Things not without Reaſon; for they excel in Clock and Cabinet Work, making Saddles, and all Sorts of Tools, and in ſeveral other Things, which I can't call to mind at this Time. There are likewiſe ſome in which they have got a Name, without any Foundation: Their ſmall Pieces of Steel Work are little worth, tho' they ſet a high Value on them, and ſell them at a dear Rate; the Temper is indeed good, but as for the Workmanſhip, 'tis ill placed, and ill finiſhed; and generally ſpeaking, they are out-done by the

French

French in every kind of Toy Work, which is indeed rather curious than uſeful, and their beſt Maſters come from *Paris*. The ſmall Experience of the People of this Country in Things of this Kind, muſt be attributed to their Diſlike of Trifles, and their too great Eaſineſs in paying roundly for every thing they buy; the greateſt Part of them judge only of a Work by the Price, and you may well think that the Workman, being at no great Pains to pleaſe them, and in the way of growing rich at his Eaſe, is not over diligent in minding his Trade, and conſequently will never excel in it.

I know the *Engliſh* Peaſants but by one way: They are commonly on Horſeback, in Riding-Coats, and Pluſh Breeches, booted and ſpurred and always galloping. None but the Carters let their Horſes go at their own pace, being oblig'd to trudge on heavily by the Cart's ſide. 'Tis pretended that the *Engliſh* Peaſants are neither ſo clowniſh nor ignorant as thoſe of other Countries.

The People in general are well cloathed, which is a certain Proof of their living at Eaſe; for in *England* the Belly always takes place of the Back. As for the common People, there's no great occaſion of giving a particular Account of them; they ſeem to me to be jumbled in moſt things with the whole Nation; generally ſpeaking, they have the ſame Pleaſures with the Nobles, the Clergy, and the Merchants, the ſame Virtues, and the ſame Vices. And tho' few of them have the Advantage of Education, they are however to be valued as well as the others, for their good natural Parts. They are ſeldom oppreſs'd by the Grandees, who are ſo inconſiderable in their Eyes, that, as I told you before, they regard them no further than they do Good. Now I

have

have told you every thing that offer'd for this time concerning the Men, give me leave to ſay ſomething of the Women.

I own to you that the Beauty of *Engliſh* Women does not touch me much: They have all fair Hair and beautiful fair Faces, but without any Sprightlineſs. I ſee here a hundred handſome Women, but not ten of the Number agreeable; yet there are ſome of another Opinion, and think them rather agreeable than handſome; what pleaſes me moſt is their Modeſty, and a gentle Baſhfulneſs, that makes them eaſily bluſh, and caſt down their Eyes every Minute: They are for the moſt part finely ſhaped, which is their greateſt Charm; they have a noble Air, and are tall, and ſlender, and they wear fine Cloaths, which is no ſmall Advantage. I have ſeen ſome that thought their Shoulders and Hips were of the ſmalleſt, occaſion'd in a great meaſure by their ſtrait way of dreſſing, but they begin to amend that Fault. They have ſtill a much greater in not taking Care of their Teeth, which is the more neceſſary, becauſe, according to the way of the Country, they eat much Fleſh, and little Bread, which is another bad Cuſtom, and muſt be attended with ill Conſequences. The want of this Niceneſs is a great Injury to *Engliſh* Women, who in other reſpects not only appear to be nice, but are really ſo. They delight in covering their Faces with Patches, which they don't want, and ſerve only to make People think they have more of a Coquet Humour than is true. There are even ſome of their elderly Women that will not part with them; I have ſeen Patches on an old Woman's Face thro' her Spectacles. As for their Humour, they are taken to be gentle, frank, and eaſy; at firſt reſerv'd,

ſerv'd, but ſoon growing familiar, even to a degree of playing the Fool; haſty in Anger, but, in other reſpect, lazy and accuſtom'd to Idleneſs. Among the common People, the Huſbands ſeldom make their Wives work: As to the Women of Quality, they don't trouble themſelves much about it, except thoſe near the Queen's Perſon, who I believe is one of the beſt Workwomen in the Kingdom, and 'tis probable ſhe may bring working into Faſhion. From their Idleneſs proceeds their Uneaſineſs, their Curioſity to know things to come, their Fondneſs of Fortune-telling, and their Credulity. This Character made the Famous Earl of *Rocheſter* think of a merry Project; he was not only the moſt debauched, but likewiſe the wittieſt Man of his time, and the beſt acquainted with Women: Having leiſure on his Hands, during the Interval of a ſmall Diſgrace at Court, he ſets up a Stage, in the Diſguiſe of a Mountebank, and gave himſelf out for a great Aſtrologer, boaſting that he had infallible Secrets for beautifying the Face. His Deſign ſucceeded, according to Expectation; the fine Women run to him in Crowds; and 'tis reported that he communicated his Secrets to ſome, and taught them the way of enjoying the preſent Time, without troubling themſelves much about that to come.

I now return to give a general Character of the *Engliſh*; but I will not warrant any Reflections of that kind, further than I find them true by my own Experience of the People. They ſeem for the moſt Part to have great Virtues or great Faults, and very often both: A great Share of good Senſe, but ſomewhat whimſical: Their Hearts are great, and their Unevenneſs of Temper flings them ſometimes a top of other Nations, and

and ſometimes under. They have a happy Way of conceiving Things, but its Fire reſembles that of their Coals, having more Force than Brightneſs. They ſpeak little, but whatever they ſay has weight. They make Reflections, and know the Value of Things ſo much the better, in that they ſee with their own Eyes, and have Courage enough to judge for themſelves. They are ſatisfied with their Condition, tho' it be but indifferent, nor do they take much Pains to make it better. Few *Engliſhmen* go a Fortune-hunting, and perhaps it may be ſaid, to their Honour, that not one of thoſe few ever ſucceeds. They enjoy what they have, and live according to their Inclinations, which ſometimes are none of the beſt. As to other Things, they are moderate enough in their Expences, that they may appear leſs happy than they really are, and for that Reaſon would have their Happineſs, in many Things, depend on themſelves. They are not much troubled about the Opinions which People may have of them, nor do they take much Notice of what others do. They thwart Cuſtom boldly, tho' never ſo well eſtabliſh'd, when either Reaſon or Inclination prompt them to it. Moſt of them neglect the ways of pleaſing, but they cultivate their Reaſon, and dare make uſe of it, as well in the Eſſentials of Life, as in other Things. 'Tis uſual with them to quit Employments, and to prefer a private and obſcure Life to Honours and Pomp. As they enjoy Life better than in other Countries, ſo are they ſooner ſurfeited, and leſs troubled in parting with it. Now I have given you an Idea of an *Engliſhman* of Merit, or an *Engliſhman* without Paſſions: A Mixture of Lazineſs and good Senſe compleats his Character.

There

There are however ſome Inſtances wherein it would ſeem as if Idleneſs ruled him abſolutely. He hates Difficulties and working, and thinks himſelf unhappy when he is engaged in Things of that Kind; he is diſheartened at ſuch as are tedious, and reſolves immediately to cut what he finds troubleſome to unravel. He is credulous in what does not much concern him, and to ſave the Trouble of examining, eaſily believes every thing that is reported, which I believe is the Reaſon that we hear ſo much talk of Apparitions in this Country. I ſhall have an Opportunity hereafter to give you many Hints of their Lazineſs, and ſome of their good Senſe. But when they lay Reaſon aſide, (which happens ſometimes) they run quite away from it, and then of all Men they are the leaſt reaſonable. They are violent in their Deſires, impatient in ill Fortune, and little capable of finding a Remedy; furious in Anger, to a Degree of beating their Faces with their Fiſts, which they do ſometimes on trifling Occaſions, and on greater, proceed to more violent Reſolutions. In a Word, the *Engliſh* keep no mean either in Good or Evil.

In Matters of Religion one would ſay that every *Engliſhman* is firmly reſolved to have one after his own way, or none at all, and that their Country, to diſtinguiſh it from all others, is without Hypocrites. But allowing that ſhould not be altogether true, it muſt at the ſame Time be acknowledged, that profeſs'd Libertines are not more numerous here than in other Countries, which is no way diſhonourable to the Nation, ſince the very ſame People that would be Hypocrites elſewhere, are Libertines here, and 'tis eaſy to decide which is the worſt of the two. There's in this Country a great Number of Fanaticks,

ticks, or People ſo call'd. This proves more and more that the *Engliſh* can make reſolutions to the Purpoſe: Some of thoſe People broach extravagant Opinions in Religion. There are at the ſame Time a great many others, whoſe Piety is ſolid and rational. This appears by the great Number of devout Books, which no doubt are compoſed by People of Virtue: The Purity and Soundneſs of the Moral which they contain, are convincing Proofs that they are the Productions of the Religious —— Beſides, tho' ſome of thoſe Books are univerſally applauded, yet the Authors conceal themſelves, which is altogether inconſiſtent with the Views of the Learned.

The *Engliſh* ſupport their Greatneſs without being intoxicated by it. I believe no one ever heard any of them cry out, *A Man of my Quality! A Perſon of my Rank!* Wealth ſits very eaſy upon them; they never make an unſeaſonable Shew of their great Expences. No *Engliſhman* ever tired me with talking of his Coach and Equipage. They always keep good Tables; 'tis the firſt Thing they ſettle, and the laſt they retrench. Next follows a Miſtreſs, who is maintain'd at a great Expence. But if I have not ſaid enough already to ſatisfy you that Avarice is not the Vice of the *Engliſh*, and that they rather fall into the oppoſite, let the Phyſicians, the Lawyers, and the Aſtrologers be thrown into the Bargain; theſe are all in great Eſteem with them, and thrive apace. Add to this, the Folly of Faſhions, ſtately Tombs, and Pomp at Funerals, which coſt great Sums. Here are likewiſe (as I am informed) Men and Women that are hired to mourn, and in my Opinion their Calling is much more neceſſary in this Country than among the Ancients; for ſince the *Engliſh* are

ſeldom

ſeldom touch'd with real Grief, and that there muſt be ſome Shew of it for Ceremony ſake, they ought to be allow'd the Benefit of counterfeiting. I am inform'd they are ſomewhat hard hearted, except when they are moved by ſome extraordinary Paſſion, and then they often fall into the oppoſite Extream.

The changeable Humour of the Nation is likewiſe made Part of their Character, and ſome pretend to impute it to the Climate. But in my own Opinion they would not appear more unſteady than other People, were it not that they take leſs Pains to bridle their Thoughts, and dare let the World ſee what they really are; that is Idleneſs and Courage. And if it be objected that they change their Conduct with Regard to their Princes, it may be perhaps becauſe their Princes, weary of living within juſt Bounds, alter their Meaſures, which obliges the People to alter theirs, in their Turn, and this may be ſometimes prudent. There's ſtill another Proof that the *Engliſh* are not ſo changeable as is imagined, 'tis becauſe Advice has no Effect upon them, after they take a Reſolution, which they often do raſhly, and execute in the ſame Manner. This appears by the great Number of People that kill themſelves, and of unequal Marriages.

This haſty way of reſolving agrees ſo well with the Character of the Nation, that one may ſee Girls make Vows to marry the firſt Man they meet in the Streets, which they ſeldom fail of performing. 'Tis eaſy to diſcover in all theſe Things ſome little Remains of *Fierceneſs*, which is the Baſis of their ancient Character. And in my Opinion they retain ſomething from the different Nations that conquer'd them. They drink like

like the *Saxons*, love hunting like the *Danes*, the *Normans* left them Chicanrie and falſe Witneſſes, and the *Romans* their Inclination for bloody Shews and Contempt of Death; if you would not rather conſider the two laſt as the natural Effects of their Conſtitutions. Some of their Characters ſeem to be inconſiſtent; they are charitable, and they are cruel; they are lazy, and yet walk faſt; ſometimes they deſpiſe Strangers too much, and ſometimes admire them too much: One would believe that they are all either Libertines or Devotees; and yet they are always ready to quarrel for ſome frivolous Ceremony in Worſhip, which does not agree with either of them. You may find many other Contradictions among them, which ought no way to ſurprize you; it proves them to be the ſame People I have deſcribed. Adieu, Sir, you know I am yours.

C LETTER

LETTER II.

Still employ myſelf, Sir, in giving you my Thoughts of the *Engliſh*, and ſo much the more willingly, becauſe you aſſure me that my laſt Letter gave you ſome Satisfaction: This will give you an Account of their Diverſions, at leaſt that of the Theatre, which is the moſt conſiderable.

The *Engliſh* pretend to excel in it; they find Matter enough in the different ways of living of the People, and the rare Invention of their Poets, to ſurpaſs the Ancients and Moderns too; thus ſome of them explain themſelves on this Head. The Truth is, People are not a little pleas'd in reading their Works on every Subject, but themſelves; but an *Engliſhman* never fails to run into Extreams, and tire the Reader in talking of his own Nation, and eſpecially when he thinks they excel in any thing. I will not undertake the Cauſe of the Ancients in this place; I only ſay that every Man of Taſte, that is pleas'd with what is natural, and acquainted with *Moliere*, will find but little Pleaſure in reading the *Engliſh* Comedies, which are much oftener ſtuff'd with Rants of Wit and Obſceneſs, than with fine Paſſages that might be agreeable and uſeful. But 'tis from *Moliere* they would carry the Prize, and 'tis he they abuſe. To vindicate him however in ſome Manner, and to give you at the ſame

ſame Time an Idea of the *Engliſh* Stage, I'll ſay ſomething here of their Comedies; and if I ſhould employ a whole Letter on the Subject, you muſt remember that Comedy is a privileged Trifle, and that even grave People have in all Times not only amuſed themſelves, but likewiſe diſcourſed of it, with as much Seriouſneſs as if it were an Affair of Moment.

Comedy has had its higheſt Period in *England*, as well as in *France*: *Ben. Johnſon*, that lived in the Beginning of this Century, is the Poet that carried it fartheſt. Let it be him that the *Engliſh* would prefer to *Moliere*, I agree to it, ſince they muſt prefer themſelves to the reſt of the World on every Subject; we are however obliged to them for making choice of ſo great a Man to carry away the Prize. But if I might be diſpenſed with from ſubmitting to the Deciſion of theſe Gentlemen, and durſt give my Opinion in the Controverſy, without running too great a Riſque, I would ſay that *Ben. Johnſon*, tho' undoubtedly a great Poet in ſome Reſpects, is yet inferiour to *Moliere* in many Things. In my Opinion he had leſs Wit, and was leſs natural; he was a Stranger to every Kind of Gallantry, he brought a great Number of Mechanicks on the Stage, and among all his Plays there are but three or four very good: He makes a Man hide himſelf under a great Tortoiſe Shell, and to paſs for the Creature. *(b)* Whereas the Sack with which they reproach *Moliere* is ſeen only in a Farce, and has nothing in it improbable. In a Word, he had not Courage enough to attack the Faults of his Country; and it may be well ſaid of him, that he did much good to Comedy, but

(*b*) Vide Moliere's Scapin.

none to the *Engliſh*. There's one Thing however to be offer'd in his Favour; that *Moliere* had more proper Materials for the Stage. The Characters in *France* are general, and comprehend an entire Order or Rank of People; but in *England*, where every one lives according to his Fancy, the Poet can hardly find any thing but particular Characters, which are very numerous, and can never produce any great Effect. After all, it muſt be acknowledged that *Ben. Johnſon* was a very judicious Poet, and that he diſtinguiſhes and ſupports his Characters to Admiration, and that his good Plays are excellent in their Kind. But let us drop their good Poets, 'tis not thoſe they ſet up againſt *Moliere*; I am to defend him only againſt the Poets of our own Days, that dare pretend to excel him; and to effect it, I need do no more than let you know what the *Engliſh* Stage is at this Time.

Here are great Numbers of new Plays, which three or four Authors take Care to furniſh, one after another. The Third Time of acting is for the Author's Benefit, and it would ſeem as if this alone had more Influence on the Play, than either the Variety of their ways of living, or the ſingular Invention of the Poet. From this proceeds his extraordinary Care to pleaſe the Crowd, and to find ſo many idle Stories that the very *Footmen* part with their Money to hear them; this he performs with ſo much Succeſs, that I dare venture to ſay, it may be alledg'd as a Reaſon, among others, that Comedy is one of the Sources of Corruption in *London*: 'Tis there the Women learn not to be frighted at an Intrigue, but on the contrary to carry it on ſucceſsfully: 'Tis there that young People are made familiar with Vice, which is always repreſented

as

as a Thing indifferent, and never as Vice. They game, ſwear, and drink, debauch Women, and fight; and the honeſt Man of the Play, as well as others, without any Diſtinction, does all this; or to ſpeak more properly, the Play has no honeſt Man diſtinguiſhed from others by that Character, and there can be no more ſaid in his Favour than that he is more genteelly wicked than the reſt. I know very well that Comedy is a Picture of Life, and that all theſe Things may be repreſented in it; but 'tis no leſs true that painting of Manners has this Advantage, that it may either approve or reject a Thing after the ſame way 'tis repreſented; and that every Poet that is ignorant of this, or that neglects it, has no great Skill, or at leaſt no great Eſteem for Virtue. 'Tis true we often ſee Folly turn'd into Ridicule in the *Engliſh* Comedies; but the Poet, for the moſt Part, goes a hunting for it into other Countries, and he that is expos'd is a *Frenchman*, or an *Engliſhman* very fond of *French* Manners. If they attack any of their own Faults, they are ſuch as are ſo very ſingular and extravagant, that they are known no where but on the Stage; ſo that the *Engliſh* Comedy is of no Benefit. Now let us ſee whether there be any thing in't to pleaſe, and if it be true that the *Engliſh* Wit, and *Engliſh* Genius, as their Authors call it, has ſo great an Advantage over the *French Bagatelle*. Don't you laugh, Sir, to ſee me take the Buſineſs ſo much to Heart, and handle it as if it were an Affair of Importance? 'tis becauſe the *Engliſh* ſhew a great deal of Preſumption on this Head, and that oftentimes produces Serioufneſs, even in Trifles. Beſides, the Subject pleaſes me, becauſe 'tis not important; and tho' I ſhould perſuade you that they don't excel in their Comedies

ſo much as they imagine, I'll do them no great Harm.

Nothing (if I miſtake not) contributes more to promote the Diverſion of the Stage, than to imitate Nature with ſo much Juſtneſs, as that Art may no way be diſcover'd, that the Poet be forgot, that the Audience be wholly taken up with the Perſons of the Play, and that they relate to them the very Things they ſay and do. The *Engliſh* Comedies have nothing of this Perfection; the Poet is always heard above the Actor. If you have ever been at Puppet Shews, imagine to yourſelf a bungling Manager, that can't proportion his Voice for any Time to thoſe little Figures, but lets himſelf be heard in his natural Tone, by which the whole Trick is diſcover'd, and ſo the Enchantment vaniſhes. The Conduct of the *Engliſh* Poet is of a Piece with this; he undeceives the Audience every Moment, by his far fetch'd Thoughts, and obliges them, againſt their Will, to perceive that he aſſiſts in the Performance. The *Engliſh* however value themſelves much for this Luxuriancy of Invention; they ſay that a *French* Poet would ſpread over a whole Play, the Thoughts that are hardly ſufficient for one Act of theirs, and they have Reaſon to ſay ſo; and perhaps the *French* have Reaſon on their Side too. There's no doubt but the *Engliſh* excel in Things that don't require Diſcretion or Management; the Diſcourſes, for Example, and their bold and happy Thoughts, of which I believe they have a greater Number than any other People. But the Over-fruitfulneſs of Invention is not the only Reaſon that their Comedies fail of pleaſing; there are other Faults, no leſs conſiderable. I can tell you of ſome of them on Occaſion of *Moliere*'s *Miſer*, which was tranſlated by

by one of their famous Poets, and I am now going to amuſe you with it, for a Minute. Here is the Beginning of the Preface.

" The Foundation of this Play I took from " one of *Moliere*'s call'd *L'Avare*; but that ha- " ving too few Perſons, and too little Action for " an *Engliſh Theatre*, I added to both ſo much, " that I may call more than half of this Play " my own; and I think I may ſay without Va- " nity, that *Moliere*'s Part of it has not ſuffer'd " in my Hands; nor did I ever know a *French* " Comedy made uſe of by the worſt of our " Poets, that was not better'd by 'em. 'Tis not " Barrenneſs of Wit or Invention that makes us " borrow from the *French*, but Lazineſs; and " this was the Occaſion of my making uſe of " *L'Avare*, *&c.*" Theſe new Perſons he ſpeaks of act a Kind of a Farce; to make a young Man drunk, cheat him of his Money, and then marry him to a Whore. This is half of the Play which the Author claims with ſo much Modeſty, and which, I believe, no one will ever jumble with the other. I never thought before this Time, that the Unity of the Subject was look'd upon as a Fault in a Play, and that its Beauty conſiſted in a great Number of Perſons. But I ſubmit it to the Judgment of the Learned.

The Prologue has the ſame Deſign, and pretty near the ſame Force with the Preface. Here's a ſmall Part of it:

" *French* Plays, in which true Wit's as rarely
" found
" As Mines of Silver are in *Engliſh* Ground;
" A fooliſh Marquiſs, or his knaviſh Man,
" Or ſome poor Pudden Fool's the beſt they can.

Will any one ever believe that a Tranſlator could make a Reflection of this Kind, or that a Play of *Moliere*'s would give any room for it? There could be no more ſaid of any inſipid *French* Comedy of theſe Times. But perhaps you are impatient to ſee ſomething of this true *Engliſh* Wit. The Author, foreſeeing that theſe great Preparations would have a ſuitable Effect on the Reader, has endeavour'd to pleaſe him; he begins with a Scene entirely of his own Contrivance, and ſince we are ſo far advanced on the Subject, I here preſent you with a Tranſlation of it.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Rant, Hazard, *and* Theodore.

" *Rant.* What a Devil makes thee in ſo muſty " a Humour? Thou art as dull and dumpiſh as " a Fellow, that had been drunk over Night with " Ale, and had done nothing but drank Coffee, " talk'd Politicks, and read *Gazettes* all this " Morning.

" *Haz.* Haſt thou loſt thy Money or thy " Wench?

" *Rant.* Nay 'faith, *Hazard*, if he has loſt his " Money, I am ſure he has loſt his Wench, in " ſpite of the noble Virtue of Conſtancy.

" *Haz.* Come, *Theodore*, a lucky Hand or " two at the Groom-Porter's will get thee as " good a Miſtreſs as any about the Town.

" *Rant.* No, pox on't! they are kept ſo high " by fooliſh elder Brothers, that poor younger " Brothers muſt deſpair of 'em.

" *Haz.* No, *Rant*, thou art miſtaken; the el- " der Brothers are ſo kind to keep 'em for the " younger,

" younger, that cannot do't for themſelves;
" they are civil to the one for Love, and the
" other for Money.

" *Rant.* I am not of your Opinion; there was
" never ſo much ready Money, and ſo little
" Love ſtirring, as at this time.

" *Haz.* Faith then we (that have but ſhallow
" Purſes) muſt three or four club for one; ſhe'll
" ſerve us all, conſidering how we drink. Come,
" *Theodore*, be not melancholy; if thou haſt loſt
" thy Miſtreſs, I'll club with thee for another.

" *Theod.* So, Gentlemen, this Dialogue runs
" off very ſmartly; you had rehearſed it before:
" But I find you have the Effects of laſt Night's
" Debauch upon you, and are hot-headed this
" Morning, what elſe ſhould make you think
" me Melancholy?

" *Rant.* Come, 'faith, thou art.

" *Theod.* I muſt confeſs, Gentlemen, I am
" not in ſo briſk a Humour as to leap over Joint-
" ſtools, or come over a Stick for the King, or
" any of thoſe pretty Frolicks; but I have no
" Trouble, unleſs you will create me one.

" *Haz.* I am ſo far from that, that I'll tell
" thee News that will rejoice the Heart of thee,
" if thou wert as dumpiſh as a young Spark that
" is newly denied to be truſted with a white Pe-
" riwig.

" *Theod.* Prythee, what's that?

" *Rant.* That which I am ſure you'll bite at.

" *Haz.* There is the moſt delicate, charming
" Creature, come to lie over-againſt us, in *Bow-*
" *ſtreet!* Oh 'tis a melting Girl! ſhe looks as if
" ſhe would diſſolve like an Anchovy in Claret.

" *Rant.* She would reliſh better (when a Man
" has the hot fit upon him) than Small-beer in
" a Fever.

Haz.

" *Hax.* Than Small-beer, a pox on't! ſhe " would be more welcome to thee than a Re- " prieve would, if thou wert juſt now trolling " out *Hopkins* and *Sternhold* upon a Ladder.

" *Theod.* You are mighty witty, and full of " Similies; but who the Devil is this incompa- " rable Lady?

" *Rant.* Pox on't! thou art as teſty as an old " lean Judge faſting, upon the Bench, between " eleven and twelve.

But this is not half the Scene. True Wit coſts this Author ſo little, that he fills whole Pages with it, without any trouble. As for my Part, I find him ſomewhat too prolix, and not being over fond of tranſlating, I cannot follow him any further. There's the turn of the *Engliſh* Comedy of our Times. The Thoughts are generally better, but there's always ſwearing, idle Stories, and Compariſons in abundance. Theſe laſt pleaſe them more than any thing elſe: There's ſuch a Profuſion of them in this Play, that there's nothing in't even to (c) *Brin D'Avoine* and *la Merluche* but are made to ſpeak by Compariſons. *Maitre Jaques* has ſome: As for *Eliſe*, the Houſe-Maid, ſhe has no leſs than half a dozen one after another. By reading this you muſt know enough of their Compariſons, and I am perſuaded it will be ſome Pleaſure to you to hear no more of them. But I muſt ſhew you ſome of the Alterations that made the Author ſay, *Moliere* had loſt nothing in his Hands; which is a modeſt way of inſinuating that he gain'd by the Bargain.

When

(c) Brin D'Avoine, la Merluche, Maitre Jaques, *and* Eliſe *are Perſons in* Moliere's Avare.

When the Miſer's Son is inform'd, that his Father was going to marry his Miſtreſs, he complains of being ill. In *Moliere*, the Father ſends him to the Kitchen to drink a large Glaſs of freſh Water. We in *France* think this is agreeable to the Character of a Miſer, and that the whole Paſſage is extraordinary: But it is not ſo here; for Water does not reliſh much with the *Engliſh*, not even in Comedy; and their Poet, who is much more delicate than *Moliere*, inſtead of an inſipid Glaſs of Water, ingeniouſly makes uſe of a Glaſs of Brandy.

When *Froſine* applauds the Frugality of *Mariacine*, and would perſuade *Harpagon* that ſhe is Portion enough of herſelf, *Harpagon* replies, that ſuch things are not ſolid, and that he would be glad to touch ſomething. In the *French*, *Froſine* anſwers: Ah! you ſhall touch enough, and afterwards is in haſte to tell him, that there's a certain Country where his Miſtreſs has an Eſtate, that he will be Maſter of. But an *Engliſh* Poet can't part with this Buſineſs of touching ſo ſoon; they that go a great way for an idle Story, take care not to neglect one they find ready to their Hands. Now you ſhall ſee what *Moliere* has gained by this Gentleman. *Froſine* anſwers: *Touch! how? You ſhall certainly touch her, and you ſhall touch every where, and as much as you pleaſe, ſhe is a pretty Creature to touch, there's a touch for you.* By theſe two Alterations you may judge of the reſt.

There are a thouſand little ways of pleaſing diſpers'd thro' *Moliere*'s Plays, which are inſipid to people without a Genius; 'tis theſe ways that make *Moliere* what he is. Were I not afraid that the Buſineſs would carry us too far, I could eaſily let you ſee that the *Engliſh* Author has drop'd

a great many of them in his Tranſlation, whether thro' Diſdain, or want of Taſte, or that for good Reaſons he would not have the People reliſh them, and tho' there were nothing elſe in the Play, it will ſtill fall ſhort in *Engliſh* of what 'tis in the Original. The Truth on't is, moſt of the *Engliſh* Poets don't know how to make an agreeable uſe of a Trifle: They heap Thoughts upon Thoughts, and generally without either Choice, or Delicacy; and they over-look, for the moſt Part, all Circumſtances that are not within a narrow Compaſs, as well as a certain familiar Language which is in Nature, and which *Moliere* knew how to employ in the moſt agreeable Manner.

But to prove in good Earneſt, that the *Engliſh* Comedies of our Time are not ſo good as *Moliere's*, is, in my Opinion, the way to expoſe the laſt to Danger; for theſe Gentlemen ſet too high a Value on theirs, they ſurprize us, and would make us give more than we have a Mind to do. They have what they call *Humour*, and pretend 'tis all their own; and tho' we ſhould give it up to them, they would ſtill fall ſhort of what they think themſelves to be. This Humour is much the ſame thing as jeſting with the *French*, and exactly what we call (*d*) *Einfall*. But not to loſe any time about the ſignification of the Word, it ſeems they mean by it, a certain Fruitfulneſs of Imagination, which for the moſt part tends to overthrow the Ideas of Things, turning Virtue into Ridicule, and making Vice agreeable. If I am not much miſtaken, 'tis the Property of a good Play, to correct as well as to pleaſe; and I ſhall

(*d*) *The Author was a* Swiſs, *as is obſerved before in the Preface.*

ſhall always look upon both together to be the chief end of Comedy, and where-ever I find it in Eſteem, I expect to ſee the People more prudent, at leaſt in ſome reſpects, and more polite. I conſider the Stage as ſomething that takes away Ridicule, and it gives me ſome Pain to ſee Comedy diffuſe it. *Moliere* was the Scourge of Ridicule in his Country; that is his great Encomium, and all the World knows how much *France* is obliged to him on that account. If *England* had had its *Moliere*, in the room of all theſe Poets with their *Humour*, perhaps ſhe might be cured of ſome great Ridicule; for Example, the little Care they take to conceal their Contempt of the reſt of the World; to take it away entirely is, I believe, above the reach of Comedy; but as to their ways of ſhewing it, I am perſuaded if a ſkilful Poet would undertake the Taſk, a great many well-bred People among them would not be reproach'd on that account, and they would at the ſame time be made ſenſible, that their Nation has its Faults as well as others. Let me now ſay a Word of their Tragedies, and I'll have done.

If the *Engliſh* could reſolve to be more natural in their Tragedies, and to ſtudy the Language of Nature more than they do, they would, no doubt, excel all *Europe*. *England* is a Country that affords a large Scene of Paſſions, and Cataſtrophes, and *Shakeſpear*, one of their beſt ancient Poets, has put a great part of their Hiſtory into his Tragedies. Beſides, the Genius of the Nation inclines to Seriouſneſs; their Language is bold and conciſe, and ſuch as is neceſſary to expreſs the Paſſions. This is the Reaſon that their Tragedies excel in a great Number of fine Paſſages; but they have the ſame Faults, if not

not more, in my Opinion, than their Comedies. The Heroes of Antiquity are diſguis'd, as they are in *France*; —— We ſee *Hanibal* with a full bottom Wig powder'd, under his Helmet, Ribbons on his Coat of Mail, and holding his Sword with a fringed Glove. The Plays, as well as the Perſons, are a Mixture of the Comic and the Serious; the moſt melancholy Events and the merrieſt Farce follow one another by turns; which, in my Opinion, is not only ill contriv'd, but entirely inconſiſtent with the end of Tragedy. In ſhort, moſt of the Executions repreſented in the Play, are done on the Stage, which is ſometimes cover'd with dead Bodies. I am told, *Oedipus* appears with his Eyes burſt. I have ſeen them pinch a Man on a Croſs for half an hour. In my Opinion, Poets that have a great Genius, and know how to work the Paſſions, ought not to have recourſe to Pincers. And they can have no Pretence to excuſe themſelves on account of the People's Taſte for Shews of that kind, ſince they have been labouring for Ages to improve it; and ſurely the leaſt good they could do to the *Engliſh*, was to fit their Guſt for the Stage.

There's another Thing leſs excuſable in their Tragedies, and that is their conſtant Attacks on the *French* Authors, that do them no other Ill than to excel them. The chief of their Tragick Poets of our Time treats *Corneille* much after the ſame Manner as *Shadwell* does *Moliere*, that is, by plundering and making Prefaces to abuſe him. But I will not enter into a particular Examination of this Subject, nor do I think there's any Occaſion for it; the Character I have given already is ſufficient: And theſe Gentlemen, that give

give their Heroes ſuch ſublime Sentiments, have but low ones themſelves; and in their Plays, where they make Strangers ſpeak, the Language is far different from that of their Prefaces, where they ſpeak themſelves; and it may be ſaid, that 'tis their Cuſtom to laugh at Honeſty and Virtue, and that they think neither has any proper Station but the Stage.

LETTER

LETTER III.

E are ſtill, Sir, on the Subject of the *Engliſh* Recreations, and you ſhould have known before this Time what I had to ſay on that Head, if poor injured *Moliere* had not met me upon the Road.

The *Engliſh* have their Opera's too, but they don't make any great Noiſe about them, nor will I ſay much on the Subject. The Muſick ſeems to me to be but indifferent, the Machines are near as good as thoſe at *Paris*, the Decorations are fine, but above all, that made of Sattin is extraordinary magnificent. They don't dance as well as the *French*; but, on the other Hand, they dance leſs frequently, and perhaps more to the Purpoſe. The ſame Thing may be ſaid of their ſinging; they ſing only the Airs, and rehearſe the reſt. There's ſomething uncommon and agreeable in theſe Airs, and in my Opinion is more ſuitable to the Taſte of melancholy People than others.

They have ſet Concerts of Muſick for certain Days of the Week, which People go to hear for Money, and in my Judgment it exceeds that of their Opera's; perhaps 'tis becauſe the Muſicians are not ſtreighten'd in the Compoſitions by the Poet. The People of Quality of both Sexes never fail to be at theſe Concerts, whither they carry a Taſte altogether peculiar: They are charm'd

charm'd with the Noiſe of Trumpets and Kettle-Drums; at leaſt the Muſicians juſtify themſelves on that Account for uſing ſuch noiſy Inſtruments in cloſe Places. I was often pleaſed at theſe Meetings, to obſerve the Confuſion among the Men, who ſeem'd aſtoniſh'd to find themſelves in a Place where they could neither game nor drink, and there being none but modeſt Women, they durſt take no Liberties, nor could they find any Subject for Diſcourſe. The Women, on the other Hand, were highly pleaſed with gaining Reſpect, (the Thing in the World they like beſt) and looking on one another. This Kind of Behaviour has this Advantage, that it gives People an Opportunity of hearing the Muſick without Noiſe.

The young Men of Quality have Meetings of their own, much after the ſame Manner, without Mirth or much polite or regular Converſation. They are generally at Chocolate-Houſes, which are ſomething more eſteem'd than the Coffee-Houſes. The People that the *Engliſh* call *Beaus*, are a Kind of a Copy of your *French* Marquis, but not quite ſo impertinent, for they don't take ſo much Pains to be heard, as to be ſeen. 'Tis not likely they can thrive much in a Country of good Senſe, where whimſical Poſtures or Ways, or an odd faſhion'd Suit of Cloaths, are but little minded, or eſteem'd; and where a Man that is nothing but Out-ſide, and that has no other Employment but himſelf, runs the riſque of paſſing for a Fool, rather than a pretty Fellow.

The ordinary Amuſements of the *Engliſh* are, Wine, Women, and Dice, or, in a Word, Debauchery. They are not nice at leaſt in the two firſt, which they join together, without either Delicacy or Agreeableneſs: One may ſay, that

they drink for drinking ſake, and their *Whores* muſt drink after the ſame Manner, and they are highly pleas'd to find any that can keep up with them. Theſe Debauches continue a long Time, and are ſometimes carry'd very far; ſome have been ſo extravagant as to ſwear they would kill the firſt Man they met in the Streets, and they were as good as their words. Two young Men were hang'd for it; but meeting none in the Street, it being two in the Morning, they call'd at a Houſe, and kill'd the Man that came to open the Door: I have ſeen a Man of Quality that had a Pardon for a Murder of the ſame Kind. But their Diverſions would be dangerous tho' they were not ſo extravagant as theſe. The Women of Pleaſure they paſs their Time with are often ſo much injur'd, that without making any Vows, they kill the firſt Man they meet, when he is mad enough to deal with them. 'Tis alledg'd that Canary and Roſa-ſolis, which they drink in great Quantities, is the Reaſon that ſome Diſtempers are ſo frequent, and ſo hard to be cur'd, in *London*. 'Tis incredible to think what a Number of thoſe Creatures are in that City, and that the Men ſhould be ſo little aſham'd of being ſeen in their Company; they are common in every Reſpect. Theſe frequent Exceſſes contribute, no doubt, to make the *Engliſh* melancholy and paſſionate, as we ſee they are: But I don't pretend to carry this Point further than it ought to be. If many of them are what I have painted them, there are a great many others of a contrary Diſpoſition, and no doubt deſerve the Encomium of *Civil and Sober Gentlemen*, which is given them by the Publick.

The *Engliſh* take much Pleaſure in walking, and are particular in this, that they always walk faſt,

faſt, nor can a Man preſerve his Health in *England* without ſtirring much; the Air is very thick, and a moderate Exerciſe will not be ſufficient. But I believe few of them take any Notice of this, however the Cuſtom of walking faſt may well be imputed to it. Walking is likewiſe a great Diverſion among the Ladies, and their Manner of doing it is one way of knowing their Character; deſiring only to be ſeen, they walk together, for the moſt part, without ſpeaking: They are always dreſs'd, and always ſtiff; they go forward conſtantly, and nothing can amuſe or put them out of their way: I doubt they would not ſtoop to take up a Flower from under their Feet: I never ſaw any of them lie on the Graſs, nor ſhew the leaſt Inclination to ſing. They are ſtrangers to walking in the cool of the Evening; and it may be ſaid, that they have no Pleaſure but in being ſeen; and that they would not find any even in a fine day, were it not that it ſets off their Finery to more Advantage, and that they are in hopes of meeting thoſe they would ſhew themſelves to: But whether this is more peculiar to *Engliſh* Women than Women in general, may be a Queſtion. Yet notwithſtanding all their Care to be ſeen, they are ſeldom Coquets; nor have they any ridiculous Affectations or bold Ways. Their Air is ſo modeſt (laying aſide their great Number of Patches) that a Man is ſometimes under a Temptation of telling a Woman that ſhe is handſome, to have the Pleaſure of letting her know it.

They take the Air in Coaches in a ſmall Circle, or Ring, made in an open Field, and rail'd: The Coaches roll gently about, ſome on one ſide, and ſome on another, which at a little diſtance looks like a pleaſant Riding-houſe; but near

hand one may ſee clearly, that they come there only to ſee and be ſeen. But this Amuſement does not begin even in the hotteſt Part of the Summer, till the day is ſpent, when walking is pleaſant; then every one goes away, as having nothing more to do. Add to this the Comedy and Concerts of Muſick, of which I have given you an Account already, and where they go to be ſeen by Candle-light, and you have exactly the outward Manner of living of the *London* Dames.

I have been curious to know whether they had any better Amuſements than publick Shews or Walking, in which I inform'd myſelf by *Engliſh-men* of my Acquaintance. If you had been in my Place, you would, no doubt, have addreſs'd yourſelf to the *Engliſh* Ladies themſelves, to know the Truth. Your brown People are moſt eſteem'd in *England*, the fair are too common. What I have diſcover'd on this Subject is, that the Women eaſily fall in Love, that they are not at much Pains to conceal it, and that they are capable of taking violent Reſolutions in Favour of a Lover; ſoft and gentle nevertheleſs, without Nicety, or Art, eaſy in Converſation, and little injured by the Tenderneſs of the Men, who beſtow but a very ſmall Part of their Time upon them. In Effect, moſt of them prefer Wine and Gaming to Women, in which they are the more blameable, becauſe the Women are much better than the Wine in *England*. But when the Men are enamour'd, 'tis with great Paſſion, Love with them is not a Weakneſs to be aſhamed of; 'tis an Affair of Serioufneſs and Importance; and the Deſign very often is either to ſucceed, or to part with Reaſon or Life.

But

But generally when they go after the fair Ladies, they take but little Pains to let them underſtand that they will not be indebted to them for their Favours. They are lazy even in Love; and never look farther than at eaſy Pleaſures. A good Fortune with them is that which is got without Trouble. *London* is, no doubt, the City in the World, where your lazy Deboſhees are beſt accommodated with the Means of pleaſing themſelves. But in caſe it were not ſo, the *Engliſh* don't ſeem to be cut out for any other kind of Gallantry: They know no Mean between an entire Familiarity, and a profound Silence; but their good Senſe will not ſuffer the laſt to be over troubleſome to them. I have ſeen, among People of Quality, Pipes and Tobacco carry'd to the Table after an Entertainment, the Women retire, and the Men ſee them go away quietly, as they were filling their Pipes.

There's yet a much greater Fault, which the *Engliſh* Women have Reaſon to complain of, and that is, that moſt of the Huſbands keep Miſtreſſes. Some have carry'd them home, and made them eat at the ſame Table with their Wives, and yet no Miſchief happen'd. I believe, if they had a Mind they would make them lie in the ſame Bed, and I don't know whether there have not been ſome that thought of it. After this, the *Engliſh* may, no doubt, boaſt to have the beſt Wives in the World. And moſt Men will envy them as much on that account, as for their Beauty. There's another thing very extraordinary, and which is no ſmall Proof of the *Engliſh* Women's Goodneſs, that theſe Miſtreſſes ſuffer but little in their Reputation: They have been ſeen even in Company with the Wives, and if there's any Diſtinction, 'tis that they are handſomer for

the moſt part, better dreſs'd, and leſs ſtarch'd. In other Places, this alone might be ſufficient to make the Wives ſhun them; but here all Occaſions of Jealouſy put together, produce nothing; which is ſo extraordinary, conſidering Women's Temper, that if you won't believe me on my Word, I can't take it ill. I believe, indeed, that 'tis thro' pure Goodneſs, that the married Women ſuffer theſe Miſtreſſes; yet 'tis not impoſſible but there may be ſome other View, and that the marry'd Women are unwilling to uſe the others with Severity, leſt by ſo doing, they might happen to make an ill Precedent, which would afterwards turn upon themſelves; for tho' the ſtrong Inclination of the *Engliſh* is for eaſy Gallantries, there are, however, ſome of another Sort, and Intrigues are common enough in *London*. Every thing ſeems to lead the Inhabitants to it: Impunity, the Greatneſs of the Town, eaſy Huſbands, lazy Wives, their great Inclination to read Things that are amourous, or idle Stories, and nothing elſe. Such as *Rocheſter*'s Works, which are contemptible for their Indecency, but otherwiſe ingenious. I have had them twice, and loſt them as often in Houſes where ſome Women happen'd to be my fellow Lodgers. To this may be added, licentious Comedy, and the little Converſation between the Men and the Women.

The common People have a great many Diverſions, which may ſerve to let them know themſelves. Some have the Appearance of Fierceneſs: As that of throwing at Cocks at ſome Diſtance. Another great Diverſion is, to ſee either Men or Beaſts fighting, where there's always Blood ſhed, There's another, very troubleſome and inſolent; this is Foot-ball, where they take

a

a great deal of Pleaſure in breaking Windows, and Coach Glaſſes if they meet any; or when there's any publick Rejoicings, they make a Lane, and toſs People, paſſing by, to and again. Many of theſe Diverſions are Proof of their happy Condition, ſince even ſome of the Grandees partake of them. You may ſee Blue Garters paſs the Time at Bowls with Tradeſmen, without any Diſtinction, which ſhews not only that Greatneſs among the *Engliſh* is no hindrance to Amuſements, but likewiſe that it does not conſiſt in the Contempt of the Populace, or keeping them at a diſtance, as 'tis in other Nations; and that they don't think their Grandeur expos'd, ſince the Dignity of Man, which is much greater, is not expos'd by ordinary Recreations. Likewiſe in their Dances, which require a great Number of People, I am told, that in the Country, when there's not Company enough, they make uſe of their Servants without any difficulty to make up the Set. There's nothing more requir'd in theſe Dances, than to place the Parties in Order, after different ways, and that they follow one after another: This gives an Opportunity to baſhful young People to be ſoon acquainted, and that, perhaps, was the End of inventing them.

The Pleaſures of the Table, in this happy Nation, may be put in the ſame Rank with the ordinary, every one is accuſtom'd to good eating. It conſiſts chiefly in a variety of Puddings, *Golden-Pippins*, which is an excellent kind of Apples, delicious green Oyſters, and Roaſt-Beef, which is the favourite Diſh as well at the King's Table as at a Tradeſman's; 'tis common to ſee one of theſe Pieces weigh from twenty to thirty Pound, and from thirty to forty: And this may be ſaid

to be (as it were) the Emblem of the Proſperity and Plenty of the *Engliſh*.

The Diverſion of taking the Air on the *Thames*, and Scolding, muſt not be forgot. 'Tis common among all ſorts of People, Men and Women, People of Quality as well as others. The Watermen, who muſt have a Share of the Sport, boaſt of the ſeveral Advantages they had obtain'd that way, among others, how they put K. *Charles* II. out of Countenance, by calling him *Chimney Sweeper*. That Prince took much Pleaſure in making himſelf familiar with all the World, which is the chief Reaſon that his Memory is ſtill ſo dear to the People; his Countenance was black, and having procur'd a Tax to be laid on Chimneys, it gave ſome Diſguſt. Going one Day by Water, and being engag'd in a Scolding-match, ſome Water-men hit upon that, which ſtopp'd his Mouth immediately. This gave them a great deal of Pleaſure, and made ſome amends for the Tax. You muſt know, by the way, that no Abuſe is ſo common, or outragious in their Eyes, as that of *French Dog*; one may hear them ſay it both by Land and Water, and to all ſorts of Strangers as well as the *French*, and I am perſuaded they think to aggravate the Title of *Dog*, by coupling it with the Word *French*, ſo much do they hate and deſpiſe our Nation; while ſome of theſe *Frenchmen*, on the other Hand, may perhaps find in that very thing ſome Reparation for the Abuſe, as valuing themſelves at a high Rate, and looking on the *French* Name to be glorious: Thus Nations are poſſeſs'd with Self-love, which is often as ridiculous as that of private People. Let us now return to the *Engliſh* Recreations, particularly ſuch as give room

to

to reproach them with having ſtill ſome Remains of their ancient Fierceneſs.

Some of theſe Diverſions are owing to the innate Courage of the Animals of the Country, as that of Cock-fighting. Their Dogs are, I believe, the boldeſt in the World, and (if the Term may be uſed) the leaſt bragging. They neither bark nor bite; they fight to Death without any Noiſe. One may ſee ſome of theſe Creatures dragging along a broken Leg, and returning to the Charge. I am aſſur'd that one of them, in King *Charles* II's time, kill'd a Lion, and that it has been proved by Experience, that ſuch as are of a true breed will ſuffer their Legs to be cut off, one after another, without letting go their hold. If I durſt, I would readily ſay, that there's a ſtrong Reſemblance in many things between the *Engliſh* and their Dogs. Both are ſilent, head-ſtrong, lazy, unfit for Fatigue, no way quarrelſome, intrepid, eager in fight, inſenſible of blows, and incapable of parting. There are however ſome that pretend to find this difference, that out of *England* the Dogs are vicious, but the Men more tractable.

Cock-fighting is diverting enough, the Anger, and Eagerneſs of theſe little Creatures, and the triumphant Crowing of a Cock when he ſtruts haughtily on the Body of his Enemy, has ſomething in't ſingular and pleaſant. What renders theſe Shews leſs agreeable is, the great Number of Wagerers, who appear as angry as the Cocks themſelves, and make ſuch a Noiſe, that one would believe every Minute they were going to fight; but Combats among the Men are another kind of Diverſion, where the Spectators are more peaceable.

The

The Aſſailants begin with running againſt each other, Heads foremoſt, like Rams, and afterwards come to Boxing. By the Laws of the Play (as they call it) a Man is not to ſtrike his Adverſary on the Ground, but muſt give him time to riſe; and the Standers-by take care to ſee theſe Laws ſtrictly obſerved. They never part till one of them calls for Quarter, which they don't do till they are quite diſabled. Theſe Combats are in great eſteem among the *Engliſh*, and very diverting not only to the Men but to the Women likewiſe. One may ſee Mothers bring their Sons, and married Women encourage their Huſbands to engage: And Perſons of Quality lay aſide their Swords, Wigs, and Neck-cloaths to box, when they are inſulted by mean People, againſt whom they muſt not draw their Swords. For if a Man ſhould happen to do ſo againſt any Perſon whatever, he would run the Riſque of being knock'd down by the Mob, which is the Reaſon that there are no *Bullies* in *London*. And ſuch as are pleaſed with Conflicts of this Kind, may eaſily indulge their Taſte by turning Prize-fighters. There are now and then ſome of them in this City; but none ſince my coming, or at leaſt I have not ſeen any.

I believe the Execution of Criminals may be put in the ſame Rank with their *fierce* Diverſions: This returns every ſix Weeks regularly with the Seſſions. The Criminals paſs thro' the City in Carts, dreſs'd in their beſt Cloaths, with white Gloves, and Noſe-gays, if it be the Seaſon. Thoſe that die merrily, or that don't at leaſt ſhew any great Fear of Death, are ſaid to die like Gentlemen; and to merit this Encomium, moſt of them die like *Beaſts*, without any Concern, or like Fools, for having no other View than

than to divert the Crowd. One of theſe Wretches, being come to the Place of Execution, deſir'd to ſpeak to ſome of his Neighbours that he happen'd to ſee in the Throng. They came to him, and then he told them, that he was unwilling to die without aſking their Forgiveneſs for a great Injury he had done them. They anſwer'd, that they forgave him heartily, but that they could not imagine what it could be. The Thief ſeem'd to be in much haſte to tell it, and at laſt own'd that he had to do with their Wives, which had troubled him very much. Another lately made the Cart ſtop before a Tavern Door, and aſk'd the Man of the Houſe whether he had not loſt a ſilver Ewer: The Man told him he had been robb'd of one very lately. Make us drink, then ſaid the Thief, and I'll tell you where 'tis. The Tavern-man being tranſported with the News, made a great deal of haſte to treat him, and he treats his Companions; and before the Cart mov'd away, he told the Tavern-man very calmly, 'twas I took away your Ewer, and you ſhall have it again when I come back. They have been obſerv'd to put their white Gloves into their Pockets on the Way, leſt they ſhould be injur'd by the Rain, and made unfit to appear at Tyburn. Something of this Kind happens at moſt Executions, and four or five Thieves are generally honour'd with Elogies. Tho' there's ſomething very melancholy in this, yet a Man can't well forbear laughing to ſee theſe Rogues ſet themſelves off for Heroes, by an Affectation of deſpiſing Death.

There's not the leaſt Appearance of any Alteration in the Faces of ſome of them, which is a much ſtronger Proof of their being under no Concern, than all theſe Bravadoes. One can't obſerve

obſerve either Fear or Paleneſs; nor could theſe Malefactors be diſtinguiſh'd from others, were it not for their Finery, and the Ropes about their Necks. I have been ſometimes conſidering what might be the Source of this Inſenſibility, which appears to me very extraordinary; but I could never account for it. I believe, indeed, that the frequent Executions, the great Numbers that ſuffer together, and the Applauſes of the Crowd, may contribute ſomething to it. The Brandy which they ſwallow before their ſetting out, helps to ſtun them; but all this would have no Effect on any other People, ſo that the *Engliſh* muſt be influenced by ſome ſtronger Reaſons to be deduced from their Conſtitutions. I am aſſur'd that 'tis uſual to ſee their Parents or Friends pull them by the Feet while they are hanging, in order to put a ſpeedy End to their Pain, which is very extraordinary.

You muſt know, the *Engliſh* die by their own hands with as much indifference as by another's: 'Tis common to hear People talk of Men and Women, that make away with themſelves, as they call it, and generally for Reaſons that would appear to us but as Trifles: The Men, perhaps, for the Cruelty or *Inconſtancy* of their Miſtreſſes; and the Women for the Indifferency of the Men. Laſt Year, in the ſpace of fifteen Days, three Girls hang'd themſelves for ſome Uneaſineſs in their Amours; and the People that told me of it, did not ſeem to be ſo much concern'd at the thing, as that two of them ſhould do it for the ſake of *Iriſhmen*, whom they deſpiſe very much, and look upon as People incapable of Love. Not long ſince, a young Man, and an only Son, drew a Piſtol out of his Pocket, and ſhot himſelf thro' the Head in his Father's Preſence,

ſence, becauſe he refus'd him Money. A Man of Figure did ſomething of the ſame Kind to vex his Wife: He comply'd with every thing ſhe demanded upon Marriage, but being afterwards diſſatisfy'd with her, and knowing her to be very covetous, he told her he would play her a Trick, and this Trick was to go and hang himſelf; thinking by that, to have her Eſtate (which was conſiderable) forfeited to the King, as is uſual on like Occaſions. Hanging, it ſeems, was formerly much in Faſhion, but now cutting of Throats is more modiſh.

An extraordinary thing of this kind happen'd very lately, and tho' it be melancholy enough, yet it made the whole Town laugh. A *Frenchman* that liv'd a long time in *England*, and thought he was *Engliſh* in every Article, reſolv'd to kill himſelf in a Fit of Chagrin. He made choice, as you may well imagine, of the modiſh way of Dying, and proceeded ſo far as to give himſelf a cut with a Razor; but being frighten'd to ſee his own Blood, and ſuddenly changing his Reſolution, he had Recourſe to the Surgeons, but they could not ſave him; and ſo he died in their Hands, to the great Joy of the *Engliſh*, who made themſelves very merry with it: They go roundly to work on ſuch Occaſions, and never retreat. To the Proofs I have already given on this Subject, which may perhaps be too many, I muſt add two more, which ſeem to be uncommon.

An old Lord, not long ſince, endeavour'd to cut his own Throat, but wanting Strength to do it to the purpoſe, his Servants happen'd to come into the Room in the mean time unexpectedly, and being in Hopes of ſaving him, they run to the Surgeon's, but the old Man being fix'd in his

his Reſolution, thruſt two of his Fingers into the Wound, widen'd it, and then died. The ſame Week, if I am not miſtaken, an Officer belonging to the Tower, being much concern'd for his Wife's running away with her Gallant, flung himſelf from a Balcony into the Street, by which his Legs were broke. He was carried immediately to be dreſs'd; but before it could be done, he took a Knife out of his Pocket and kill'd himſelf. Theſe People ſeem to contradict an Obſervation that is made, as if thoſe who reſolve to fall by their own Hands, are however capable of being ſurpriz'd, and even willing to live, when they are under an Apprehenſion of dying after any other Mode, than that they made choice of. The Author of that Reflection, who knew Men very well, did not know the *Engliſh*, for 'tis certain they will die ſome way or another, when they have taken a Reſolution, as they often do on ſmall Occaſions. 'Tis difficult to know the Source of this Singularity, if it be not what I have already hinted to you in their Character: They are violent in Paſſion, (that is) they are reſolved to ſucceed; proud withal, and incapable of bearing ill Fortune, or mending it; and, in a Word, too melancholy for any Buſineſs but their Chagrin; and tho' they are leſs influenced by Cuſtom than other Nations, yet they ſuffer very much by it on this Occaſion: So many Examples of voluntary Death before their Eyes, ſeem to encourage them, as the *Roman* Matron did her Huſband, ſaying, *O! Pæte, there's no Pain in it.* 'Tis, no doubt, very unhappy that ſuch Madneſs ſhould get in among them, and be look'd upon as a piece of Prudence even by good People. *He was weary of Life, he is*

is got out of it, ſays one of them, when he was told that his only Son had jump'd into the *Thames* and was drown'd. They part with Life generally much after the ſame Manner, calmly, and with a good Grace. 'Tis true, indeed, they take care to enjoy it firſt, by ſhunning Buſineſs, and every Thing that is troubleſome. This is the *Engliſh Art* of Living, which is ſomething more important than a Man's retiring handſomely from a Viſit.

Now I have ſaid enough of Murder, in a Letter that treats of Diverſions, the ſmall Remnant of Fierceneſs which is ſtill in the Nation lead me to it. I would not have you any way offended at this Word; it inſinuates, no doubt, ſomething very odious to Strangers, but at the ſame time it produces a great many good Effects among the *Engliſh*. 'Tis to this Fierceneſs, which can bear nothing, and is jealous of every thing, that they owe their chief Happineſs, their Liberty. 'Tis by this that the People, tho' divided and plunged in Proſperity, and Idleneſs, recover in a Minute all their Strength and forget their Diſputes, to oppoſe unanimouſly every thing that tends to ſubdue them. In other Countries, they that engage in dangerous Enterprizes have nothing to loſe; but here thoſe that engage in ſuch Deſigns are the People that have the greateſt Eſtates, that can't live without them, and that would ſoon hang themſelves ſhould they loſe them any other way than by a Plot. One may venture to ſay, that a Nation ought to have ſome Portion of this ſavage and fierce Temper to preſerve them from Slavery, as an honeſt Man ought to be ſomething of a *Miſanthrope*. In all other Countries, when a Man is diſgraced

at

at Court, he is ſo with all others; his Friends abandon him, and is unhappy in every reſpect. Here 'tis quite otherwiſe: A Man is complimented on leaving the Court as one recovered from Sickneſs, and may expect to have more Friends than before. Reaſon alone cannot have ſo much Influence upon Men, there muſt be ſomething of this Temper to ſupport it. 'Tis this chiefly that renders the *Engliſh* ſo unfit for Court: As they have in all Times been fond of Liberty, they can't bear Conſtraint. They are not given to talking, but when they ſpeak, 'tis not ſo much to flatter a great Man as to tell the Truth. Sometimes they happen to do it bluntly, and on Occaſions where it ought to be done; and their Liberty, or Courage, in this Reſpect, is one of thoſe Things that gain them Honour, and ſhould induce others to imitate them; but ſince few can do that with a good Grace, it were at leaſt to be wiſh'd, that ſome of theſe *Engliſh* were diſpers'd through the World, to tell Men ſuch Truths as none elſe dare venture to do. And next to that kind of Courage which is neceſſary for great Deſigns, this may claim the firſt Rank. The *Engliſh* have but little dependance on the Court, or even on the Publick in their way of living, nor will they be Slaves to Cuſtom. They indulge their Inclinations, and pleaſe themſelves with wiſhing for things that are extraordinary. They have Courage enough to thwart common Opinion, and the Crowd, and even paſs for Fools, when 'tis neceſſary, which is a great Step to become truly reaſonable; while we ſee extravagant Follies, in the mean time, become general and

and hereditary, among Nations more civiliz'd and uniform, through the care People take to reſemble one another, and their Apprehenſion of deviating in the leaſt from their Neighbours. Adieu,

Sir,

I am heartily yours.

LETTER IV.

I Have ſpoke to you of the *Engliſh* as a People that, for the moſt part, have a greater Share of good Senſe, than is generally obſerv'd among other Nations. You deſire to know the Reaſon of ſuch a Superiority, and how I dare ſtill find Fault with them after acknowledging it. I muſt endeavour to gratify you on that Head, tho' I ſhould be accuſed of ſaying more than is proper in a Relation of Travels, or for one in my Condition.

Good Senſe is given to all Nations; 'tis the Eſſence of Man; but all Men don't maintain or cultivate it with equal Care; which, in one Senſe, is the Thing that diſtinguiſhes Nations. Different Governments, Wants, and Advantages, have induced them to ſubſtitute different Things in the room of good Senſe. In *France*, where every one endeavours to pleaſe, and the Government is ſuch, that few can bear up without courting the Grandees, in lieu of good Senſe they have a kind of Behaviour and an ill turn of Converſation they call Wit; which are very oppoſite to it, ſince they conſiſt, for the moſt part, in the Knack of ſetting off Trifles to advantage, which good Senſe deſpiſes; ſo that a Man would be tempted to ſay, there's leſs of it in *France*, generally ſpeaking, than any where elſe. The *Dutch*, that inhabit a barren Country, where People are

are obliged to live by Induſtry, and the Government is an Enemy to Grandeur and Pageantry, have introduced Commerce and Frugality, which, no doubt, make the Underſtanding heavy; but in the main are no way oppoſite to right Reaſon, and it muſt be acknowledged that there's as much of it in *Holland* as any where elſe. The *Italians* that live in a delightful Country, have for their Share made choice of Pleaſure, and the Art of indulging Senſe; wherein they have ſo well ſucceeded, that they are wholly given up to it, which is as much as to ſay, that, generally ſpeaking, there's not much Reaſon to be expected among them. The *Germans*, who have been famous in all Times for Accompliſhments of Body, turn their Thoughts chiefly that way, by applying themſelves to Exerciſes and Dreſſing, and think the Improvement of the Mind conſiſts in ſtudying the Languages and Sciences, ſuch as are taught in the Schools; by which their Reaſon is too much confin'd and prevented from exerting its Faculties. Theſe, or any other Things once introduc'd in a Nation, and become, as it were, ſacred thro' Cuſtom, poſſeſs, fill, and fire the Mind, ſupplant Reaſon, and exclude it. Let us now ſee whether the good Senſe of the *Engliſh* is embarraſs'd with ſuch Obſtacles or not.

Their Government is mild; they enjoy Liberty, which elevates the Mind, and are not neceſſitated through any urgent or particular Conſideration, to ſubmit to mean or low Conceſſions that corrupt it. They live at their eaſe, and the Country and the Sea furniſh them with every thing they want in abundance; ſo that they have no Occaſion for over much Œconomy,

or to make it their chief Care. Tho' the Country abounds with things neceſſary for Life, it does not, however, produce ſuch delicious things as may give the People an Occaſion of refining much upon Pleaſure, and giving themſelves wholly up to it. They have no great Opinion of Finery or Dreſſing, which they leave to the Women, or of the Exerciſes, or generally of any thing that ſerves only to ſet off the Body; whether 'tis becauſe they are not over handſome, or that they ſhun whatever requires much Care, or puts them under any Conſtraint. They have too good an Opinion of themſelves, to imitate other People; and, in a word, they are ſuch great Enemies to every kind of Slavery, (which is of more Conſequence than all the reſt) that they depend but very little upon Cuſtom. You muſt conclude from all this, that there ought to be fewer conceited Opinions in *England* than elſewhere, and conſequently more good Senſe. But ſince every Nation has ſome certain Portion, or Meaſure of Folly, which they can't get rid of, it comes to paſs that in a Country free from Cuſtom or general Folly, there's at the ſame time a great number of particular Errors, which muſt vary the Deſcription of the Manners of the People, and give frequent Occaſions for Cenſure. The ſame thing happens here; but I have one thing to add, 'tis this, that whatever I may ſay, is only intended to regard Nations in general, and that far from denying Reaſon is to be found among them, I am perſuaded there's none without a greater number of Men of Merit, that appears to the World. Let us now return to the *Engliſh*, and the Proofs they give of their good Senſe.

I believe I have told you that ſome of them ſhun publick Employments, to which they prefer the Repoſe and Pleaſures of a retired Life. This Singularity ſeems to me to be of Importance, and is a Proof of their good Senſe, among many others, and I dwell upon it the more willingly in regard 'tis not only uncommon, but it may likewiſe be a neceſſary Inſtruction to us. Here are great numbers of thoſe People that decline publick Buſineſs, and tho' they don't do much good to their Party by ſuch a Conduct, they do them, however, a great deal of Honour; if it be true that there's more Merit in living without Buſineſs, than in being concerned in it; but they may even do them ſome good, and perhaps all that is poſſible. A few Men of Merit are not ſufficient to change the Courſe of Affairs; by Men of Merit, I mean thoſe that underſtand the whole Extent of their Duty, and perform it with Exactneſs. They ſee the Impoſſibility of redreſſing things, and that it might not be ſaid, they labour in vain, they chooſe to live as private People, or if they happen to be in Employment, and ſee their Endeavours turn to no Account, they retire from publick Buſineſs, to avoid being idle Spectators of their Country's Ruin, at a Juncture when the Redreſs is expected at their Hands. And ſince by this Method they are not capable of doing any Service to their Party, what can they do better, than to chooſe for their Lot, the Employment of doing good in ſome Village? A Man ſerves his Country by giving extenſive Marks of Probity and Tranquillity of Mind; but the greateſt good he can do is to give the Publick an Example of Diſintereſtedneſs, as being, perhaps, the thing moſt wanted,

eſpecially in a Country where People are ſo accuſtom'd to Employments, that they think themſelves unhappy and diſhonour'd without them; tho' this pretended Neceſſity of coming to Preferment is the Source of Corruption and Miſery; nothing but Examples of a Conduct oppoſite to this, can undeceive People of an Error ſo eſtabliſh'd and general, and let them ſee, that 'tis in every one's Power to continue in the State he is in, and conſequently that a Man is under no Neceſſity of being corrupted to come at publick Employments, nor excuſable for neglecting any thing that ought to be done by thoſe that enjoy them. But ſince Example is to little Purpoſe, when thoſe that ſupport the Character of a private Man with Dignity, are not yet able to encourage any one to follow them, the beſt thing perhaps that a Man can do in theſe *melancholy Times*, is to think of nothing but himſelf: A Man of Integrity and Steadineſs meets with Croſſes on all ſides in the Affairs of Life, and with Difficulties not to be overcome, and ſooner or later Occaſions happen, when a Retreat is the only Courſe that remains; things of this kind fall out here commonly. I muſt let you know the Reſolution of an *Engliſhman* in an Affair of this Nature, and how far he has Courage to follow his Reaſon.

The King uſed all his Endeavours to hinder the Triennial Bill from paſſing, and got as many as he could on his ſide. The Queen took much pains the ſame way. Among others ſhe ſpoke to my Lord *Bellemont*, who was her Treaſurer, and got others to ſpeak to him to oppoſe the Bill. But my Lord looking on a Triennial Parliament, as a thing neceſſary to the Welfare of the Kingdom, had the Courage to refuſe

fuſe the Queen; upon which ſhe told him, that ſince he would not be of her Party, he ought not at leaſt to join her Enemies, and deſir'd that he would not go to the Houſe that Day: This was a way of Compromiſe which few Princes propoſe, and which I believe no Courtier ever refuſed before; but among the *Engliſh* the honeſt Man prevails over the Courtier. He would not comply with this neither, but goes to the Houſe, ſpeaks for the Bill, and contributed not a little to get it paſs'd. Here is a greater Inſtance of Virtue than is uſual at Courts; the Queen was in a great Rage, and thinking herſelf rather affronted by him as one of her Servants, than thwarted as a Member of Parliament, loſt no time in making him repent it. She ſent to tell him that ſhe did not pretend to make a Man rich by her Favours, that declares himſelf againſt the King's Intereſt, and ſo took away his Employment. Upon this he took a Reſolution agreeable for a Man of Senſe and Courage: He retrenches his Equipage, and laid aſide every thing he could be without; his Son, for whom he kept a Governour, is ſent to the Univerſity; and my Lord, who was always uſed to a Coach, goes a Foot. In a word, without either Concern or Complaints, he leads a Life from that time conformable to the ſmall Income that remain'd. There happen'd on this occaſion an Affair much to the Honour of the *Engliſh*, and is a Proof of their Independancy on the Court, as well as of their Regard for a good Action. A great number of thoſe that were obliged by their Employments to be of Prince *George*'s Party, and conſequently to be cautious, went immediately to viſit Lord *Bellemont*, they complimented him on what had

paſs'd, and offer'd him their Purſes: Their Applauſes made much more Noiſe than the Mortification which the Queen intended for him. There's ſtill one Circumſtance wanting to ſet off this *Engliſhman*'s Greatneſs of Soul in its higheſt Luſtre, and to ſave the Queen's Goodneſs: This is it exactly. The Queen, (whoſe Behaviour in this Affair was no more than the Reſult of her firſt Heat) thinking that ſhe had done enough to mortify a Man of Merit, and, no doubt, repenting of it, offer'd him a Penſion, that he might live at leaſt like a Man of Quality; but he ſupports the ſame Character to the End, and ſo refus'd the Penſion, telling the Queen, that ſince he was not to ſerve her any more, he ought not to accept of any Reward. If true Greatneſs (as there's no room to doubt it) conſiſts in being wiſe and ſteady, my Lord *Bellemont* is truly Great. 'Tis in this Country, that theſe great Men are to be found, which is, in my Opinion, the moſt curious Thing in *England*, and what beſt deſerves the Attention of Travellers. It were to be wiſhed, that they would turn it a little more that way, and acquaint us with all the particulars that come to their Knowledge on Subjects of this kind: Theſe familiar Examples would be very uſeful, and more, perhaps, than all thoſe glittering Actions which Hiſtory is ſtor'd with, and which are often vicious, and unworthy of our Imitation; by this Method we ſhould at laſt be enabled to comprehend that all that is told us of Virtue is not mere Chimera, that 'tis not impoſſible to renounce Ambition and Avarice, and that that is the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt way to Happineſs. But in *England* there are Ceremonies, Buildings, and old ruin'd Houſes with Inſcriptions; ſo that there's but little Appearance

pearance that Travellers will give us a Deſcription of *Engliſhmen*, or if ever they do, it will, no doubt, be of another Sort of Heroes than thoſe I have been ſpeaking of.

When People ſhew as much good Senſe in their Actions, as thoſe of this Country, 'tis eaſy to uſher it into Converſation: Accordingly we find a great deal of it in theirs. They handle a Trifle without dwelling upon it, or putting themſelves into a Paſſion. Good Senſe is what they eſteem moſt, and ſeldom talk of a Man for having Wit, or being without it. They ſpeak of Things as they apprehend them, without any Fear of claſhing with conceited Opinions, tho' common, which, for that Reaſon, muſt be of leſs weight among them than others; ſo that their Converſation is always agreeable by new Thoughts, and often judicious when they conſider Things on the right Side. We find they have juſt Ideas of many Things, wherein other Nations are miſtaken. You would be much pleas'd to hear them make frequent uſe of the Word *Plain* as ſomething Praiſe-worthy, and that of *Cunning* as a Thing that is baſe. They never take the Title of a ſimple or innocent Man in an ill Senſe, whatever Tone they pronounce it with; 'tis ſo far from it, that they can't praiſe their Nation more than in ſaying, they are a good-natur'd People, and pretend that there's neither the Name nor the Thing in other Countries. Another Proof of their good Senſe in Converſation is, the Silence with which they intermix it; and I believe it would not be difficult to juſtify even their *How d'ye do*, which they repeat at Times, and which the *French* laugh at, and attribute to the Want of Wit to ſupport Converſation. The *Engliſh* have very well obſerv'd, that when People

ple talk only for talking ſake, there muſt be a great many idle things ſaid, and that Converſation ſhould be a Commerce of Sentiments, and not of Words; and ſince, for that Reaſon, there may not be always Matter enough for Diſcourſe, they keep Silence for a long time; and then they have a Cuſtom of breaking it off with a *How d'ye do?* which they make uſe of at Times, and is a Piece of Civility, ſignifying, that they are attentive on thoſe they are in Company with, tho' they have nothing to ſpeak to them about. But the tireſome frothy Diſcourſe of the greateſt Part of thoſe that laugh at them, who would paſs for the Witty and Agreeable in Company, juſtifies the ſilent Temper of the *Engliſh* much better than all that can be ſaid for it.

Their Writings are better known than their Converſation, and are celebrated for their good Senſe, which is often found even in their Dedications; for I muſt tell you, by the by, that the *Engliſh* dedicate Books as well as other People; but they know how to do it without praiſing, and to praiſe without cringing. There's a great deal of good Reaſoning, but few Citations in their Works; and is as much as to ſay, that they deſpiſe Authorities, and that among their ſeveral Kinds of Liberty, they value that of Reaſon at a high rate, and are pleas'd to have it valued. As for Theſts, I am aſſur'd they have fewer of them than others, if you except the Stage, that is to ſay, the *Bagatelle*. Every where elſe they deſpiſe this Kind of Robbing, and 'tis more likely that they are the People that are robb'd; the ſame good Senſe by which they excel others in the Sciences, demonſtrates to them likewiſe their Uncertainty and Vanity, of which, perhaps, they are more ſenſible than others, and have,

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at the ſame time, the moſt Courage and Honeſty to acknowledge it.

'Tis Matter of Concern to a Man to ſee People with ſo many good Qualities, ſo little communicative and ſo harſh to Strangers that court them. As this is one of the great Faults they are reproach'd with, it ought to be examin'd a little. All that can be ſaid againſt them on this Account may be reduced to this; that they don't compliment us much, or that they are ſlow in doing it: As for inſulting us, I believe none charges them with it, except it may be ſome of the Story-Mongers that have never ſeen the Country they give a Deſcription of, or that exaſperate every thing in order to make themſelves appear more conſiderable. I ſay then, that the *Engliſh* do no more in this reſpect, than what we ſee reaſonable People do every Day: They are generally reſerv'd at firſt, and open their Minds in Proportion to their Knowledge of the People they deal with. On the other Hand, we reap the ſame Advantage by them, which is common among reſerv'd People, and ſufficiently recompences thoſe that covet their Company, *viz.* that we may depend more on their Friendſhip, once gain'd, than upon that of your eaſy, fawning People, that condeſcend immediately to every thing, and even obviate thoſe that don't deſire their Company. It muſt likewiſe be obſerv'd, that 'tis the *French* that complain moſt of this Behaviour, without conſidering this is a Country, where the People are cool, and reſerv'd, and conſequently ought not to mind ſuch forward and officious Pretences of Friendſhip, with which they are not acquainted. When *England* is cenſur'd on this Account, 'tis always by People that judge of it with Regard to *France*,

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and that come from thence for the moſt part. But I think they don't exclaim ſo much, when they come into this Country by the Way of *Holland*. In a Word, if People pretend that the *Engliſh* have ſtill ſomething worſe than this Coolneſs, or Indifferency, that is, their Contempt of Strangers, it ought to be conſidered, that moſt of them ſtay in the Country to make their Fortunes, and court the *Engliſh* for that Reaſon. And therefore, ſhould they think meanly of us, or deſpiſe us, I don't ſee they are much in the wrong; for they themſelves are content with what they have, and never travel but for Pleaſure, as People ought to do that have already made their Fortunes. And in my Judgment, the Fault we have moſt Reaſon to reproach the *Engliſh* with, is their extravagant Opinion of their Nation and Country: 'Tis certain they can't hear either found Fault with on any Account; in this Reſpect they are far leſs reaſonable than the *French*, of whom a great many well-bred People, not only acknowledge what is blameable in the Nation, but even prove it by the Writings which they publiſh to correct it. This Self-Love of the *Engliſh* is, of all things, the moſt troubleſome to Strangers, who deſire to be acquainted with them: It hinders People from converſing freely on all Subjects, and informing them of the Manners, and Character of the Nation. I am,

Sir,

heartily yours.

LETTER

LETTER V.

NOW that I am about writing to you concerning the Laws and Policy of the *Engliſh*, don't expect an exact Enquiry, which is difficult in Things of that Nature; I can only inform you of ſome ſingular and uncommon Paſſages, that have ſurpriz'd me, and which, in my Opinion, well deſerve your Attention. Nor would I have you think that there's nothing commendable in either, becauſe my Remarks tend to their Diſadvantage. Both are, no doubt, good in ſome Reſpects, as well as in other Countries; but 'tis only the ill Part in all Governments that is taken Notice of, becauſe we ſuffer by it: The Good, which only prevents our Suffering, is not ſo eaſily obſerv'd.

The *Engliſh* Government is excellent in many Things, and in nothing more than in ſupporting Liberty; which is, at the ſame Time, permitted to degenerate on ſeveral Occaſions into Licentiouſneſs, and that to ſuch a height, that I don't know whether it be for the Advantage of the *Engliſh* to maintain it. The People, that Proſperity has render'd forward enough to attempt any thing, have been permitted, from Time to Time, to ſlip into exorbitant Privileges, which they now look upon as their own: For tho' the Laws in Being are not ſufficient to keep them within Bounds, yet ſhould any Alterations happen

happen to be made, to make them more effectual, the People would immediately regard them as ſo many Attacks on their Privileges. Let us now ſee what they are, and how much every thing ſeems to favour them. One of the Ways tending to that End is, never to aid the Law, but to keep ſtrictly to the Letter, which is done ſometimes after a childiſh Manner: For Example, 'Tis againſt Law to have two Wives; but to avoid it, a Man has no more to do, than to marry three. Not long ſince the Thing was prov'd, or at-leaſt thought to be ſo by moſt People, and I believe they would have ſtill continued in the ſame Opinion, had not a raſh unthinking Fellow ſpoil'd all by carrying things too far. As he travelled thro' the Countries, he marry'd all the pretty Girls that came in his way. But the *Lawyers* have ſince bethought themſelves, that a Man cannot marry three, without firſt marrying two, and ſo the *Engliſh* have loſt their Privilege. I am aſſur'd that a Man can't be arreſted, if he finds any room for chicaning about the Spelling of his Name; he has no more to do, than to tell the Catch-poles that the Writ is not againſt him, and they muſt acquieſce. Every one, as you may well imagine, is ready enough to take Advantage of theſe Quibbles, to play with the Laws, and ſo get rid of the Danger.

In caſe of a Crime not puniſhable by any known or poſitive Laws, the Judges chooſe rather to acquit the Criminal, than to have Recourſe to general Laws that might be rigorous. Suppoſe a Man would be reveng'd on another, or inſult him, he need only take Care that the Crime be not ſpecified in the Defence or Anſwer, and then he is ſafe. Some Years paſt, a Man happen'd to

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cut off his Adverſary's Noſe; but it had no other Conſequence, than making a Law againſt the Offence. 'Tis true, there was one in Force at that Time againſt Maiming; but the Man alledg'd in his Juſtification, that a Perſon without a Noſe was not maim'd, but disfigured; and ſo eſcap'd by that Diſtinction. This gave Occaſion to make an expreſs Law againſt Disfiguring, which comprehends all Parts of the Body, and puts them out of Danger. What a Jeſt is this in ſo ſerious an Affair, and among ſuch grave People!

But let us examine a little what ill People have to fear, or the Good to hope for from the Laws. Let us begin with the Thieves, who are ſo conſiderable a Body, that the Government ought, in good Earneſt, to think of ſome Expedient to deſtroy them. But this is not thought of; 'Tis ſo far from it, that they are treated in ſuch a Manner, as to make them ſomewhat eaſy, and not to repent altogether of chooſing ſuch a kind of Life. Here I'll acquaint you with the Things that ſeem to be done on purpoſe to encourage them. If one gets into a Houſe, or other Building, without breaking open or forcing any thing, he is acquitted for a ſmall Fine, or ſome other trifling Puniſhment, let the Theft be never ſo conſiderable. If he goes to work awkwardly, and has the Misfortune to be taken, and condemn'd, People do all they can to comfort him, and make his Condition eaſy: He keeps all the Money he ſtole, and if you aſk the Reaſon of ſuch an extraordinary Cuſtom, they tell you, the unhappy Creature's Life pays for all, and that People's Money can't be diſtinguiſhed, ſo as to be able to return every Man his own. At this rate they have Money enough to ſoften the

the Thoughts of Death; they eat, drink, and divert themſelves ſometimes in getting a Year's time for the Women under Condemnation, that happen to be lock'd up with them. Here, as well as in other Countries, they don't execute Women with Child, or ſuch as give themſelves out to be in that Condition, as all may eaſily be in this Place; for there's nothing to hinder the Sparks that keep them Company from being in a good Humour, and doing them Service; or in caſe theſe Gentlemen ſhou'd happen to fail, the Jaylor or his People are gallant enough to prolong their Days. There's generally all ſorts of Debauchery and Wickedneſs in the Priſons, and every thing looks among thoſe that are condemn'd, as if there was nothing more to fear, or that an approaching and inevitable Death was a Motive to Pleaſure and Corruption. Thus an *Engliſhman* will ſay, Liberty follows us every where, and we find a way to enjoy it even to the End of our Lives.

The Women of Pleaſure are treated with as much Gentleneſs as the Thieves, there's a prodigious number of them, they follow their Trades openly, and ſpoil two thirds of the young Men with Impurity. If one of them finds herſelf impregnated, ſhe may pitch on who ſhe will for a Father, and make him a Preſent of a Child. If they are aſk'd any Queſtions about the Matter in their Lying-in, 'tis after ſuch a Manner, that any one might be perſuaded there was no harm in it, or that there could be a Juncture when a Lie ſhould be troubleſome to a Crack. The Men are oftentimes ſurprized to find themſelves Fathers all of a ſudden, and to have Children they did not think of. I know

know a *French* Gentleman that was not a little perplex'd about one of theſe *Preſents:* The Girl that carry'd it to him was very ugly; he was very vain, and would much rather be ſuſpected of any thing elſe, than an Intrigue with ſuch a homely Piece. He would by no Means accept of the Baby, and ſo gave Security, according to Cuſtom, to prevent going to Priſon, and in the mean time took a great deal of Pains to juſtify himſelf. There was one merry Circumſtance in the Affair, if the People of the Country may be believed, the Gentleman, it ſeems, carry'd *Teſtimonies* enough about him to prove his Innocence in a Minute, and ſo as never to be under the like Apprehenſions for the Time to come; an *Engliſhman*, no doubt, would ſooner die than get off in ſuch a Manner. But the Girl's Death, which happen'd in the mean time, put an End to his Fears; ſhe own'd, as ſhe was dying, that what ſhe did was only for Intrigue ſake, and to ſee how he would get rid of it.

The marry'd Women of Gallantry have as little Reaſon to complain of the Laws, as the Ladies I have been talking of: There's one as much to their Advantage as they can wiſh, which decides a grand Point in their Favour; a Huſband is obliged to father all the Children his Wife is deliver'd of, while he is in the Kingdom, tho' he can prove that he had not ſeen her for Years. The Women have many other conſiderable Privileges tending the ſame Way; they can't be found guilty of the Buſineſs without the cleareſt Proofs, and pretty near ſuch as Madam *Pernelle* inſiſts upon in *Moliere*, which is impoſſible for the Huſbands to produce, they muſt be conſtantly poſted be-

hind their Wives, and *ſee all with their own Eyes*, for no other Proof will do. The firſt Duke of *England* prov'd his Misfortune clear enough, at leaſt ſo as to ſatisfy the Publick, but yet he could not get a Divorce from his Wife. All the Satisfaction he had, was to make the Gallant (who was a rich Tavern Man's Son) pay a conſiderable Sum of Money in an Action of *Scandalum Magnatum*, which puniſhes any Diſreſpect to the Noblemen. So that in this Country 'tis as great a Fault, and there's juſt as much Danger in debauching a Lord's Wife, as to ſpeak ill of him.

'Tis true, indeed, that this Toleration does not ſhelter the Women from all Dangers; for there are ſome Huſbands that have Recourſe to other Expedients, when the Laws won't help them: I'll inform you of what an *Engliſhman* told me on the Subject. A certain Woman finding her End draw near, bethought herſelf of aſking her Huſband's Pardon for a great Injury ſhe had done him, and with which ſhe would acquaint him, in caſe he promis'd to forgive her. He readily comply'd, and then ſhe own'd an Affair of Gallantry; the Huſband aſſur'd her that he would not reſent it, adding withal, that he had done her ſome Wrong, for which he aſk'd Pardon, this ſhe did willingly, being no leſs ſurprized, than tranſported with her Huſband's extraordinary Goodneſs. Upon this he own'd to her that he was well appriz'd of her Conduct, which had made him poiſon her. Here's an Inſtance of the cool Blood, and Conſtancy of an *Engliſhman* that has taken a Reſolution. It is well that People who are ſo ſteady don't do it often in all Things, eſpecially in a Country where the Laws are ſo eaſy. But to put

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an End to the Proofs I have given of their extraordinary Gentleneſs, let us go on to the falſe Witneſſes.

If theſe Wretches are not entirely above the Fear of Puniſhment, it may be ſaid at leaſt, that 'tis ſo light, and that there's ſo little Proportion between the Riſque they run, if they are found guilty, and their Proſpect of Gain in caſe of Succeſs, that a Man ought not to be ſurprized at their Numbers. In the Year 1692 a Fellow forged a Writing, and counterfeited the Hands of ſeven of the chief Lords of the Kingdom, who engag'd themſelves by it, to favour King *James*'s intended Invaſion, and to ſeize the Queen. He found a way of conveying the Paper ſecretly into the Biſhop of *Rocheſter*'s Houſe, who was one of the ſeven. He inform'd againſt the Biſhop, upon which he was taken up, and all his Papers ſeiz'd, except this that was forg'd, which as Fortune would have it, the Meſſengers could not find, and this was the only Thing that ſav'd the Lords. Tho' I ſhould ſay no more of this villainous Attempt which is ſcarce credible, I am perſuaded you have heard enough to aſtoniſh you, eſpecially when you conſider that it was undertaken with no other View than to get Money. But the Story does not end here, there's a great deal remaining untold, which is more incredible than what you have heard. The Roguery is all found out; and the Rogue, who was worth nothing, and conſequently without Friends, is left to the Severity of the Laws, but meets with no other Puniſhment than the Pillory, that is, to be expos'd for ſome Hours to the People's Laughter, and the Dirt which is thrown at him. Had he ſucceeded in this, or any other Deſign of

the ſame Kind, he might well hope for a very great Reward; if he miſcarries there's nothing more than the Pillory; when a Man once loſes his good Name by Things of this Nature, and ſuch a Puniſhment, he goes to work again without any Heſitation, and may undertake any Wickedneſs. How childiſh is all this! will you ſay, or rather, what little Care do they take in *England* to ſecure People's Honour and Lives! or have the *Engliſh* no more good Senſe than what every one makes uſe of for himſelf, or his own private Affairs?

If, on one hand, the Government is negligent in finding out proper Ways to keep wicked People within Bounds, it takes but little Care, on the other, to relieve the unfortunate; and it may be affirm'd that the firſt don't ſuffer ſo much by the utmoſt Severity of the Laws, as the other by their neglect; if it be true that hanging is a leſs Puniſhment than ſtarving with Hunger, which is often the hard Fate of ſome Priſoners for Debt: They muſt maintain themſelves, for the Creditors are not obliged to contribute any thing towards it, and the King allows them (as they call it) nothing but Drink, that is to ſay, Water. People are often arreſted for Trifles, a few Shillings, perhaps, which are much more difficult to be got in a Priſon than out of it, and after ſome Time, they have not Money enough for Subſiſtance, much leſs to pay Debts with. Some have been reduced to live on the Rats and Mice they have catched; others ill uſed by the Jaylors in many Reſpects, and afterwards poiſon'd. Theſe Wretches have publiſh'd a whole Volume of their Sufferings, and were in ſuch Haſte to apprize the World of them, that they wiſh'd the whole

whole Book might be contain'd in the Title, which is too long to be quoted at large; but here you have the Beginning and End of it: "The Cries of the Oppreſs'd: Or a True and "Melancholy Account of the unparalell'd Suf- "ferings of the poor Priſoners for Debt in moſt "of the Priſons in *England*——— with other "barbarous Cruelties not to be found in any "Hiſtory or Nation whatever. The whole made "out from the cleareſt Proofs." The Book was printed in 1691, and addreſs'd to the Parliament; but I have not heard that it has yet produced any Effect.

'Tis difficult to proceed any further without exclaiming againſt ſuch Cruelty as this, which is not only uncommon, but aſtoniſhing. The Policy of the *Engliſh*, in not remedying every Kind of Inconveniency, as much as they might, is not unlike that of other Nations; for to keep Men in Order, and make them live neighbourly together, muſt be a difficult and imperfect Work in all Countries; but to ſee Thouſands ſuffer miſerably in the common Priſons, and many die for Hunger, and the Government not vouchſafe to apply any Remedy, is what could not be well expected among theſe *good Natur'd* and wealthy People, (many of whom are often choak'd with their own Fat) and in a Country where the *Prince's* Care is ſo extenſive and condeſcending, as to order the very Ducks and Fiſh in Ponds to be well ſupply'd, and that by printed Declarations poſted up in ſeveral Places. But the great Cruelty of the *Engliſh* conſiſts rather in tolerating the Evil than in doing it. 'Tis certain they abhor all cruel Things; Duels, Aſſaſſinations, and generally all Sorts of Violence

are very uncommon in this Country, and I don't remember to have heard any thing of poyſoning, except the two Inſtances I have mention'd; for generally ſpeaking, an *Engliſhman* vents his Rage upon himſelf.

Their aboliſhing of Tortures (which are a Shame to Chriſtianity) is no ſmall Proof of their Averſion to Cruelty. They are look'd upon here with Horror, and never put in Practice even to diſcover the Accomplices in a Plot; while other Nations that regard the *Engliſh* as Savages, and value themſelves very much for extraordinary Politeneſs, ſtill retain this barbarous Cuſtom, and carry it ſo far, that the moſt frightful Tortures are in the Rank of common Formalities in criminal Proceedings. I'll acquaint you here, in a few Words, with the Method which the *Engliſh* obſerve in Things of this Nature; it ſeems to me to be ſingular, and I think it preferable to any thing of the Kind in other Countries.

No Man is puniſh'd with Death without being found guilty by two Courts of Juſtice; the firſt conſiſts of above twelve (*e*) Judges, but twelve at leaſt muſt agree in Opinion, the other conſiſts of that Number, and no more, they muſt all live in the Neighbourhood of the Party accuſed, and be of the ſame Rank, as near as poſſible; after they are ſworn, they continue together, without eating or drinking, till they are agreed in their Verdict: If you obſerve well, you'll find that all the Circumſtances in the whole Proceeding are to the Purpoſe, and well grounded: 'Tis to them we are indebted for an extraordinary Affair that happen'd

(*e*) *The Author means the Grand and Petty Juries.*

pen'd ſome Years ago: A Man was accuſed of Murder, and the Evidence was ſo clear, that eleven of the Jury were for finding him guilty without any Heſitation; the twelfth would not agree, but continued obſtinate in ſpite of all the Arguments offer'd by the Judge to convince him: At laſt, the other Jury-men, being preſs'd by Hunger, came over to his Opinion, and ſo the Priſoner was acquitted. The Judge, being ſurpriz'd at the Man's Proceeding, aſk'd him the Reaſon of it in private; he comply'd with the Requeſt, having firſt bound the Judge to Secreſy. The Man that acted this extraordinary Part proved to be the Murderer, but he would neither violate his Oath, nor conſent to a ſecond Murder. When one conſiders the Conciſeneſs and Brevity of this Method, and reflects at the ſame Time on the abominable Tediouſneſs in Civil Cauſes, which are ſpun out to as great a Length in this Country, as any other, 'tis difficult to comprehend how Years ſhould not be ſufficient to put an End to one trifling Suit, among People that require no more than a Morning to determine between Life and Death; and that the ſame People who are ſo fond of Liberty in other Things, can ſubmit tamely to the ſhameful Tyranny of Law-Tricks, and of thoſe whoſe Profeſſion 'tis to improve them.

'Tis ſurprizing to ſee People ſometimes condemn'd for ſmall Matters, and others eaſily acquitted at the ſame time that ſeem to be much more guilty; the Reaſon is, becauſe they don't determine any thing but on the cleareſt Proofs, without any Regard to Probability. Here Malefactors may ſometimes eſcape the Puniſhments they deſerve; but 'tis rare to ſee an innocent

Man ſuffer: Tho' theſe Criminal Proceedings are very moving, yet we ſee them often attended with ſuch gay and airy Circumſtances, (no way agreeable to ſo melancholy a Subject) that the printed Accounts of them are in the Opinion of many People one of the moſt diverting Things a Man can read in *London*. Among other Particulars, there's an Account of the Preparations made by ſome of the Malefactors for Death; and always that others would not liſten to the Ordinary's Admonitions, or that they were inſenſible, and reſolv'd to prepare themſelves for Death after their own Manner, which is a Thing no way ſurprizing to the People here, nor perhaps to you neither, after all I have told you already in their Character: The *Ordinary* endeavours, on his Part, to perſuade the Reader, that the Unhappineſs of the Criminals muſt be imputed to their neglect of the Sabbath, which is look'd upon here not only as the heighth of Impiety, but likewiſe the Way to it. So that in this Country, as well as in others, the People always make choice of ſome eaſy Duty of Religion, and apply themſelves to it zealouſly, as if it were ſomething more eſſential than ordinary, and ſo it may be truly ſaid, that among the Preachers the People make the greateſt Number.

Theſe Executions, with the Farces that attend them, have made me think, with Aſtoniſhment, of the Obſtinacy of the *Engliſh*, for not making ſome Change in their Laws. For it appears very plain, that theſe People that have ſo little Fear of Death, are ſenſibly touch'd with the Apprehenſions of any other Kind of Puniſhment; and there's no room to doubt, but one Example of condemning a Thief to any hard Labour

Labour that was to continue for a conſiderable Time, would have more Influence than all theſe frequent Executions, which are ſcarcely look'd upon to be infamous, and conſequently can never produce any great Effect. Something happen'd not long ſince, as it were on Purpoſe to convince them of this Truth; a Thief was found guilty of ſtealing ſome ſmall Matter, and ſent to the Work-houſe. He was no ſooner come out of it, but he return'd to the old Trade, and is taken again. They deſign'd to ſend him once more to Work, but he would not bear to think of it, and chooſing rather to die, he own'd that he had ſtole a Silver Baſon from a Goldſmith, which he proved, and ſo got himſelf fairly hang'd for it. This Contempt of Death, and Fear of Labour point out very clearly the way to free the Country of Thieves; and there are a great many Reaſons to prefer this Kind of Puniſhment to the other, ſince all reaſonable People agree, that there's no Proportion between the Crime and the Puniſhment, between Thieving and Death. 'Tis true other Nations agree with the *Engliſh* in this reſpect, but theſe ſhew an unaccountable Indolence (not to be met with any where elſe in my Opinion) in their neglect of ſuch Expedients, as would ſoon put an End to the Practice. You wou'd, perhaps, think that they look upon theſe Executions as ſo many publick Shews due to the People, and that a Stock of Thieves muſt be kept up and improv'd for that End.

There are many other Reaſons to prove that the Laws of this Country are far from being rigorous; but if any of them happen to be more ſevere than ordinary, they are but faintly executed. I believe there has been enough ſaid

to

to ſatisfy you, that a Man ought not to be ſurprized to hear the People value their Laws very much, and think them the beſt in the World. 'Tis much more ſurprizing, that People of ſuch good Senſe, ſhould not make uſe of it on theſe, as well as on other Occaſions, by accommodating their Laws and Cuſtoms to their Neceſſities: But I believe it will be eaſy to find the Reaſon partly in the Form of their Government: It ſeems the great Buſineſs of Parliament is to watch the King, and his to watch the Parliament; ſo that the People, which both of them endeavour to manage, enjoy, in the mean time, all the Licentiouſneſs they can wiſh for. Beſides, 'tis certain, that ſuch free and wealthy People as the *Engliſh*, can't be ſo eaſily brought to follow any Party, as others; being too much accuſtom'd to gratify their own Humour in obeying. I could readily add a third Reaſon, that the ſame ſound Underſtanding which renders a Man truly great, unhappily inclines him rather to ſhun publick Affairs than to redreſs them.

I embrace you, SIR, *&c.*

LETTER VI.

WHAT you deſir'd of me, Sir, in your laſt, puts me in Mind of an Affair that happen'd here not long ſince. A Muſician ſat down to ſing to ſome of his Friends. After he had entertain'd them with ſome of his beſt Airs, one of the Company deſir'd him to ſing a Ballad then in Vogue. The Muſician being provok'd at ſuch Uſage, gave him a terrible look, and went away, without ſinging any more. I will not take upon me to maintain that the Letters I write to you were fine Airs; but 'tis certain that the Deſcription of *London*, which you deſire, is no more than a kind of a Ballad, in Compariſon of the People that live in it, and that you muſt think me very good, if I continue ſinging after ſuch an Affront. I don't, however, approve of the Muſician's ill Humour: And ſince you are for Ballads, I am reſolv'd you ſhall have them.

London is ſituated in a Plain along the *Thames*, which is here in the Form of a Half-moon; the Plain is ſomewhat ſhelving, ſo that the Situation is very agreeable. And tho' 'tis at this Time the greateſt City in *Europe*, the People are ſtill adding to it; and great Numbers coming from all Sides to ſettle in it, it was thought neceſſary to build whole Streets.

The Streets are wide and ſtrait, eſpecially thoſe that have been built ſince the great Fire, which

which are about half the City. They want nothing but to be better paved. 'Tis ſurprizing, that in ſuch a wealthy City (where People never retrench any thing for being ſuperfluous) they ſhould neglect what is really neceſſary, and be ſaving in a thing that might keep them from the Dirt and the Duſt.

The Houſes are built with Bricks, and made very convenient, the ſmalleſt Corners are uſeful for ſomething or other. The Ground is very dear, ſo that People make the moſt of it. They take it commonly for a certain time, forty or fifty Years perhaps, and calculate Things with ſo much Exactneſs, that the Buildings ſeldom ſtand much longer. But they are ſometimes out in their Computations; and 'tis common to ſee ſome of theſe daring Accomptants cruſh'd to pieces by Houſes that drop before the End of the Term. Their way of Building is both agreeable and expeditious. A Man in this Place has the Pleaſure of ſeeing his Houſe built in leſs time, than is allow'd in other Countries for laying the Foundation. Let us now go on to the chief Places of this great City. I am ſenſible I promiſe too much, and that Prints would be more proper than a Letter; but 'tis that you deſire, and not Prints, and my Deſign is to pleaſe you.

Whitehall is ſituated between the *Thames* and the Park, and is a great old Houſe, very ugly, but very convenient. It has nothing like a Palace but the *Banquetting-houſe*; the reſt is a heap of ill built Houſes, which were not intended to join. This is the ordinary Reſidence of the Kings of *England*. But the preſent King lives at *Kenſington*, in a ſmall Houſe which he bought of a private Perſon, the Smoak and thick

Air

Air of *London* not agreeing with his Conſtitution. 'Tis about a Mile and an half from it, and has nothing extraordinary either for Building or Gardening.

St. *James*'s is another Royal Palace; 'tis old, and very irregular, but convenient and large. There's nothing elſe to make it agreeable, but the Proſpect of the Park, which is near it. Let us get into it, to refreſh ourſelves a little after the Fatigue of deſcribing the three Royal Palaces.

The Park is a large Extent of Ground with Walks ſet with Trees all round, which are very agreeable. There's a Canal in the middle edg'd with Trees, where one may ſee the Ducks ſwimming; the reſt is Meadow, and Paſture for Deer and Cows. Its great Beauty conſiſts in bringing (as it were) the Country into the City. I am inform'd, King *Charles* II. intended to have added more Ornaments to it, and that he had ſent for a ſkillful Perſon from *Paris* for that Purpoſe, the ſame that deſign'd the Scheme for adorning the *Tuilleries*. After he had taken a narrow View of the Place, he found that its native Beauty, Country Air, and Deſerts, had ſomething greater in them, than any thing he could contrive, and perſuaded the King to let it alone. So the Park remains in the ſame State, that is, a fine Country-like Place, and is the more agreeable, in my Opinion, becauſe it has neither Art nor Regularity. This is the Place where People go to get rid of the Dirt, Confuſion, and Noiſe of this great City, and where the Ladies in fine Weather diſplay all their Ornaments. They make a fine Appearance, as I have told you before, and their Splendour is the more ſurprizing, becauſe we imagine 'tis in the Country we ſee them.

There's

There's another Royal Palace to be deſcribed, which is called *Somerſet-houſe*. 'Tis no ſmall Concern to me that I cannot gratify you in this, and to find myſelf obliged to ſend you an imperfect Account of *London* for Want of ſo important an Article. The Truth on't is, I did not foreſee that any one would ſet me to this Taſk, and beſides, not being over curious to ſee Buildings, I unhappily neglected this. But, if you pleaſe, I'll ſay ſomething of the *Thames*, which runs juſt by it.

Next to the Park, I ſee nothing more agreeable or commodious than the River. I ſay nothing of its Breadth or Depth, which, with the Advantage of the Tides, render it capable of receiving the largeſt Ships of War, and 'tis to this that the Wealth and Greatneſs of the City is owing. What pleaſes me beſides is, the Gentleneſs of its Stream, and a thouſand little Boats that cover it, and paſs from one End of the City to the other when People have Buſineſs, or for Pleaſure when they have none. On theſe Occaſions there are ſometimes great Numbers of Hautboys and Violins, which render the Amuſements on the Water extremely delightful.

There's a private Houſe more ſtately than all I have mention'd, and is properly what Travellers call a *Thing worth ſeeing*; this is my Lord *Montague*'s. The *Engliſh* are modeſt enough, when they go no further than to ſay, 'tis the fineſt Houſe in *London*; if they don't imagine that that comprehends every thing. The Houſe wants nothing but Furniture and People: You would think 'tis a Prince's Palace that does not live in it.

There are ſeveral Squares in *London*, ſome of them are very fine, and ſurrounded with Palliſadoes

ſadoes and Rails, but they are generally far ſhort of what they might be made. They are not much adorn'd, and few People ſtop to amuſe themſelves about them, which would be very proper for this great City, and would ſhew the Number, Wealth, and leiſure Time of the Inhabitants. I believe, indeed, that the Park makes People neglect theſe Places, and that they are not ſpacious enough for thoſe that walk faſt. I am likewiſe of Opinion, that the great Number of Coffee-houſes, where People ſee one another conveniently, is one Reaſon that theſe Squares are ſo little frequented. But whatever 'tis, be ſure to remember this as a thing very remarkable, that there are a great many Places in *London* called Squares, where People may walk, and where few do.

The Tower of *London* well deſerves a whole Letter; and generally ſpeaking, it takes up a great deal of room in the Pocket-Books of the Gentlemen that travel. 'Tis the Citadel of the City; the Arſenal, the Priſon for People of Quality, and the Mint. I don't remember all, and 'tis poſſible I may have forgot half its Titles. There they ſhew Crowns and Sceptres, Axes, and Clubs, Lions, Leopards, and other terrible Things. The Governor of a young Gentleman, not long ſince, examin'd all very carefully, and was of Opinion, that the Thing which deſerv'd chiefly to be taken Notice of, was the Axe that cut off the Head of a Queen of *England*; he made the young Gentleman under his Care, take off his Glove, and hold the Axe in his Hand, that he might boaſt of it on Occaſion.

If you have any Friend that is curious, and that intends to travel into *England*, you may give him an important Piece of Advice; that is,

that

that he need not be in much haſte, for St. *Paul's* Church is not yet finiſh'd; People are conſtantly at work upon it, and 'tis in a very forward Condition. 'Tis only waiting five or ſix Years, at moſt, to have the Pleaſure of ſeeing it compleatly finiſh'd; 'tis one of the largeſt Churches in *Europe*, and is capable of putting a ſtop to all the Corruption of *London*, provided the Efficacy of the Sermons is anſwerable to the largeneſs of the Building.

That of *Weſtminſter* is very curious for its Antiquity, the Tombs, and Epitaphs of the illuſtrious People that are interr'd in it, and alſo for *Henry* the Seventh's Chapel; but above all, for its being the Place appointed for the Coronation of the Kings of *England*. If a Man has not the Happineſs to ſee this rare Ceremony, he may, however, get ſome intelligent Perſon, as he views the Church, to ſhew him the Manner of performing the whole, and then form an Idea of it with the Satisfaction of imagining himſelf to have been on the Spot.

The ſtately Building call'd the *Royal Exchange*, is another Ornament of the City, and might furniſh Matter enough for a Deſcription, which, no doubt, would become one of the Ornaments of my Letter, could I perſuade myſelf to undertake it; but ſeveral Obſtacles ſtand in the way, and eſpecially the Apprehenſion I am under leſt I ſhould not perform ſo great a Taſk with the Exactneſs which is ſo neceſſary and agreeable in the Deſcription of Buildings. I'll tell you no more of it than this, that the Merchants meet there every Day at a certain Hour, and that I have had ſometimes the Pleaſure to ſee from its Top, the World in Epitome, and laugh'd to ſee Men, for a little Gain, ſtir about like a Swarm of

Ants, and hear them humming like a Swarm of Bees.

The Monument ſtands near the *Royal Exchange*; I muſt tell you what it is, for then I ſhall have the better Opportunity of giving you an Account of an Inſcription, being an eſſential Thing to a Relation of Travels; it gives them an Air of Literature and Importance which they have not without it, and makes them immortal, if any Thing can. The Monument is a Column of the *Dorick* Order, chamber'd and hollow, 'tis rais'd near the Place where the Fire begun. This being the higheſt Building about *London*, People go to the Top for a Proſpect, and 'tis the firſt Place viſited by curious Travellers. There's a long Inſcription at the Bottom, by which the Papiſts are charg'd in bitter Terms with being the Incendiaries. King *James* order'd it to be eraſed; afterwards the *Engliſh* had it cut deeper than it was. And ſince they are a People ſubject to Revolutions, 'tis not improbable but they may be obliged to make uſe even of the Foundation, if they are ſo very obſtinate about their Inſcription.

'Tis no ſmall Concern to me, now I have enter'd on ſo curious an Affair, that I can't go any further, and entertain you with the Plan of ſome Building, the Deſcription of a Tomb, Blazoning of a Coat of Arms, an Account of ſome Bas Reliefs, a Diſſertation on ſome Medal, or, in a Word, that I can't reſtore ſome Inſcription half worn out, which would raiſe me even to the Sublime. In the room of all this, Sir, I preſent you with an humble and ſincere Acknowledgment of my Want of Capacity for Things of that Kind. I muſt even confeſs, my Negligence has been ſo very great, as not to ſee the Cere-

mony of giving Judgment againſt a Lord, which happen'd ſince my coming to *London*, and that I did not go to the Horſe-Races, which is one of the greateſt Diverſions in *England*. Dare I tell it? I have even neglected to ſee the King in his Robes, and the famous Univerſities of *Oxford* and *Cambridge*. Let me tell you what I have ſeen.

There's a prodigious Number of Coffee-houſes in *London*, the Outſides have nothing remarkable, or worth deſcribing; ſo that I'll ſpeak only of their Cuſtoms, which deſerve ſome Notice, becauſe moſt of the Men reſort to them to paſs away the Time. Theſe Coffee-houſes are the conſtant Rendezvous for Men of Buſineſs as well as the idle People, ſo that a Man is ſooner aſk'd about his Coffee-houſe than his Lodging. Beſides Coffee, there are many other Liquors which People can't well reliſh at firſt. They ſmoak, game, and read the *Gazettes*, and ſometimes make them too. Here they treat of Matters of State, the Intereſts of Princes, and the Honour of Huſbands, *&c.* In a Word, 'tis here the *Engliſh* diſcourſe freely of every Thing, and where they may be known in a little Time; their Character, likewiſe, may be partly diſcover'd, even by People that are Strangers to the Language. It appears coolly in their Diſcourſes, and Attention to what they hear; you don't ſee them interrupt one another, nor ſeveral ſpeaking at the ſame Time. They repreſent theſe Coffee-houſes as the moſt agreeable Things in *London*, and they are, in my Opinion, very proper Places to find People that a Man has Buſineſs with, or to paſs away the Time a little more agreeably, perhaps, than he can do at Home; but in other reſpects they are loathſome, full of Smoak like a Guard-

Guard-Room, and as much crowded. I believe 'tis theſe Coffee-houſes that furniſh the Inhabitants of this great City with Slander, for there one hears exact Accounts of every thing done in Town, as if it were but a Village.

The Shops are handſome and large, and there's no room to fear the dangerous Civility of the People of *Paris*, that would engage a Man to buy more than he has a Mind to do; nor the cold and blunt Behaviour of the *Dutch* Merchant, that is always for ſaving Charges; you are neither ſooth'd nor ſower'd by the Merchants in *London*. They ſeldom aſk too much: Strangers buy as cheap as others. 'Tis true, the *Engliſh* pay ſo roundly for every thing, that the Merchants can do no more than uſe us as if we were *Engliſh*; but we are oblig'd to them for not diſtinguiſhing us in the odious Manner they do on other Occaſions, which is more provoking than the Loſs of the Money they ſharp us of.

That you may think me an exact Writer, you ſhall have an Article on the Taverns, and 'tis ſurprizing that we Travellers ſhould ſay ſo little of them, ſince they are, perhaps, the Things we are beſt acquainted with. Every Thing is exceſſively dear in them, but ſo far all are treated alike. Fiſh Entertainments are much better here than in *Paris*; but there's no Compariſon in other Things, eſpecially the Attendance; and it muſt be owned that a Tavern is the proper Place for Haſte and Forwardneſs. I had like to have forgot ſomething very particular and important, the Tavern Signs are extraordinary big, and magnificent; I have ſeen ſome in Villages that were worth pretty near as much as the Taverns themſelves.

There are great Numbers of Hackney Coaches in *London*, they are pretty cheap, and ready at a Moment's Warning; all the Croſs-ways, and Corners of Streets are crowded with them. The Coachmen keep in their Boxes, but watch People narrowly as they paſs by, and run towards a Man on the leaſt Signal: This, in my Opinion, is one of the Advantages which *London* has of *Paris*. And without this Conveniency, People wou'd paſs their Time but very indifferently in this Place, for it rains continually in Winter; and the Streets being ill pav'd, are ſcarce fit for walking. Sometimes a thick Fog mixed with an offenſive and unwholeſome Smoak, covers the Town; ſo that in *London* a Man is employ'd either to keep himſelf out of the Dirt, or ſhut up in a Coach, to prevent being blacken'd or poiſon'd with the Smoak. Beſides this, the Streets are very ill ſerv'd with Lights in the Night-time; 'tis true, for ſome time they have made uſe of Lamps, but there's not a ſufficient Number of them; and beſides, they are made after ſuch a Faſhion, that a Man is rather dazzled than lighted from the only Side which caſts a Light.

The Winter Dirt is follow'd by intolerable heaps of Summer Duſt; it ſpreads every where, and ſometimes makes very fine Houſes unfit for Habitation. Then People retire to the Country, and you wou'd ſay that the *Engliſh* muſt have Duſt to make them go. This may, perhaps, perſuade you, that the Country here is not agreeable, or that the *Engliſh* have no great Inclination for it; but this is not altogether true, and before I finiſh my Letter, I muſt ſay ſomething of it. And now I hope your Curioſity is entirely gratify'd, after all I have told you about the City

City of *London*, and that you'll put it in the Number of thoſe you know, and myſelf among the complaiſant People, that can't refuſe their Friends any thing, and that find nothing impoſſible, when they are reſolv'd to pleaſe them.

The Country is moſtly plain, but not uniform, which makes flat Countries very diſagreeable. There are Hills here and there, ſo that you have always a Proſpect. You may ſee Rivulets winding; and Woods of ſeveral ſorts, Parks, and fine Houſes. But what is more agreeable than all the reſt, is the Verdure, which is more lively and durable than in other Countries, but they pay pretty dear for it, ſince the moiſt Air by which 'tis nouriſh'd, ſoon puts an End to their fine Weather, ſo that they have nothing but Leaves, when other People have Fruit: Theirs have but little taſte, except the *Golden Pippins*, which I believe I have ſaid ſomething of already. Their Flowers have little ſmell; their Game is inſipid; and I don't know that there's good Water any where; and they have no Wine, which is a greater Mortification to them than all the reſt: You know there are no Vineyards in *England*, and tho' they bring Wine from other Countries, yet they have not the Pleaſure of eating Grapes, which is, in my Opinion, the great Inconveniency of Countries that have no Vineyards.

The *Engliſh* value this Country I have been deſcribing, at a very high rate; they boaſt of it in an extraordinary Manner, and prefer it to all the Countries in the World, as they do themſelves to all other Nations. I wiſh it were in my Power to give you an Account of their Manner of Living; but I never durſt inform myſelf ſufficiently about it. I am told, they make one another long and frequent Viſits at Hunting

Matches, and at Entertainments; the firſt conſiſts in running faſt, and the other in drinking hard; but I muſt not forget one Circumſtance among the reſt, that there are ſome Occaſions, where the People that value themſelves for doing every thing in order, get but half drunk with the Man of the Houſe, that they may afterwards compleat the Work thro' the good Will of the Servants. They have ſome other very particular Ways which I take no Notice of here, becauſe I know them but by Report: I was ſatisfy'd with this uncertain Intelligence, leſt there might be ſome Myſteries in the way, which none can approach unpuniſh'd.

I am but juſt return'd from a ſhort Journey I took into the Country, but I have not ſeen any thing worth relating, except Sir *William Temple's* Place of Retirement, and another Houſe that is not ſo ſolitary. I happen'd by chance to be in the Neighbourhood of that famous Negociator and Philoſopher, and in the Interim I recollected ſomething I had read a few Days before in one of his Books: That *England* was exclaim'd againſt in the World, for no other Reaſon but becauſe Strangers that come to viſit her, had, generally ſpeaking, no other knowledge of her than what they got in their Inns, and by People worth nothing; and perhaps without Merit, Birth, or Fortune to give them an Opportunity of knowing People of Figure. I thought a Man that reproach'd Strangers after ſuch a Manner, could not excuſe himſelf from giving a good Reception to thoſe that went to viſit him, and beſides that, I had no Reaſon to be apprehenſive of any violent or boiſterous Diverſions. I went accordingly, and was receiv'd with great Civility, but this, in my Opinion, is nothing to the Kingdom

dom in general; for there are but few ſuch as Sir *William Temple* in *England*, no more than in other Countries, and a few ſuch able Men as he, conclude nothing for their Country; for they poſſeſs all the good Qualities of the Nations they are acquainted with. I ſpoke to him about his Writings; he aſk'd me whether I had read them in *Engliſh* or in *French*; and on my telling him it was in *French*, he complain'd of the Tranſlation, ſaying, that they *had barbarouſly murder'd it.* Here I ſaw the Model of an agreeable Place of Retirement: 'Tis far enough from the City not to fear Viſits, the Air is wholeſome, the Land good, the Proſpect bounded, but pleaſant, a River runs by the Houſe, and makes the only Noiſe that is heard; the Houſe is ſmall, but convenient, and nicely furniſh'd; the Garden proportion'd to the Houſe and cultivated by the Owner, himſelf free from Buſineſs, and, in all Appearance, without Deſigns, few Servants, and ſome People of Senſe to keep him Company, which is one of the moſt agreeable Things in the Country, to the Man that is ſo happy as to have it. I obſerv'd, at the ſame time, the Effect of all this; Sir *William* is healthful and briſk, and tho' he is much troubled with the Gout, and advanc'd in Years, yet he tired me with walking, and had it not been for ſome Rain that fell in the mean time, he would, I believe, have obliged me to call for Quarter. You may well imagine I did not ſee all this without ſighing ſeveral times, and reflecting on the Reaſons that carried me to this Place, to diſturb People in their Retirement.

The good old Gentleman thought I was not recompenc'd enough for my Trouble, ſince I ſaw nothing but his Houſe; and tho' I aſſur'd

him I was much more curious in Men than in Buildings, and that I was ſatisfy'd with the Honour of ſeeing him, he would have me, by all Means, viſit the Duke of *Somerſet*'s Country Houſe at *Petſworth*, before I return'd to *London*, he complimented me with Horſes and Servants to conduct me, and fearing that the Duke might be gone to *London*, he made Lady *Temple* write to the Dutcheſs. The Duke receiv'd me very civilly. He lives retir'd in the Country for the moſt part, if a Man can call it a Retirement, where there are above a hundred Servants, a finer Palace than the King's, and as good a Table. I am of Opinion, a moderate Income is as eſſential to Retirement, as it is to the Happineſs of Life, and that a Man of boundleſs Riches has too great a Taſk upon his Hands. I was conſtantly thinking, in this ſtately Palace, of Sir *William Temple*'s ſolitary Houſe and little Garden, which made me dream of the Pleaſure of a private and quiet Life. I did not think of any thing elſe, and return'd to *London* with all the Expedition that could be, to prepare Things for my Departure.

Now, Sir, I take Leave of you, and will not think my long Travels into *England* to be in vain, if my Letters give you any Pleaſure, or if they hinder you now, that you are ſo near, from coming over, and doing that common and unprofitable Thing call'd a *Tour into England*.

LETTERS

Concerning the

French Nation, *&c.*

LETTER I.

SIR,

THE Pleaſure I have had in ſending Letters to you concerning *England*, and that which you ſay they have given you, puts me into the Humour of writing to you about *France*, and the *French* Nation. Here 'tis eaſy for me that am unpoliſh'd and a *Swiſs*, to excuſe myſelf (were it neceſſary) from ſo bold an Undertaking: It will look as if I had exercis'd my Parts and ſet them an Edge on another Nation, before I begun with the *French*.

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As to the Objection of my venturing to characterize Nations, without being frighten'd at the private Characters of the Men that compoſe them, I am of Opinion 'tis not ſo bold an Enterprize as it ſeems to be at firſt. Men change and differ from one another, but the Difference does not alter the Character of the Nation; it only introduces ſome Diverſity. I muſt deſire you to obſerve, that when I ſpeak of the *French* Nation, I mean by it the greateſt Part of the People, and that I except Perſons of Merit out of it; they are above the Character of their Nation, and muſt be treated of diſtinctly. I likewiſe except ſuch other Perſons, as are diſtinguiſh'd on Account of their Conſtitutions, or any other particular Circumſtances, for my Deſign is to ſpeak of the Multitude only, that is, the *French* Nation.

The *French* are more forward in ſhewing their beſt Side, and anticipating People's Expectation than any other Nation: 'Tis by that way which firſt offers itſelf, that I muſt begin to make them known to you. They are eaſy of Acceſs, civil, obliging, and forward; they appear to be ſincere, open and very affectionate; they love to pleaſe People, and to do it readily and with a good Grace. They ſeem to be cut out for Society in every reſpect; they love Mankind, and deſerve to be loved. But they are not, for the moſt part, content with the Sentiments of Friendſhip which they inſpire; they muſt be applauded and admired, and particularly by us Strangers. They look upon us as if we were made for that End, and as it were to admire them before-hand; it muſt be own'd they are not altogether miſtaken, and that Strangers are, generally ſpeaking, what they ſuppoſe them to be. The Things they would

would have us admire in them above the reſt, are their Wit, their Sprightlineſs, Politeneſs, and Behaviour. They think a Man's greateſt Merit conſiſts in them, and pretend to be diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of the World on that ſcore; and it muſt be allow'd, that the Character of the *French*, with reſpect to their Vivacity, and the good Opinion they have of themſelves, is diſtinguiſh'd from that of all other Nations. 'Tis true, all have ſome Preſumption, and Self-love is ſo much diffus'd among Men, that People in general, as well as private Perſons, have each their Share, and make themſelves ridiculous by the Advantage which they pretend to have of others. But it varies according to its Object; ſome value themſelves one way, and ſome another, and this is it that partly forms their different Characters. Vivacity, and the Pleaſure it gives the *French*, are the principal Things that ſhew theirs.

But this Vivacity, which is their known Character, has the ſame Fate with ſuch as are equivocal or ambiguous, and depend only on Opinion; for if ſome are charmed with it, and think the *French* the firſt Nation in the World, there are others at the ſame time that have no Regard for it, but, on the contrary, think it diſagreeable. They pretend that Men ought, for the moſt Part, to be cool and plain, according to their uſual way of walking, and that a ſprightly Nation, that ſpeaks nothing but Wit, deſerves to be admired much after the ſame Manner that another Nation ſhould be, that never ſtirr'd but when they danc'd. They maintain that good Senſe is the eſſential Quality of Man, and that 'tis it which unites Men, and that this ſprightly Wit, which they prefer to good Senſe, and the Sentiments

ments of the Heart, may not be entirely what People imagine. They obſerve, that moſt of thoſe who acknowledge this Character of the *French*, admire them the leſs, and that the more they know them, the leſs they agree with them, and that they ſee thro' the Varniſh, which at firſt is dazzling and pleaſant; and perhaps not without Reaſon. It may even be true that theſe fair Appearances, which are nothing at Bottom, are the very Things which make People afterwards not only eſteem the *French* leſs than they deſerve, but even to hate and deſpiſe them: We are always very ready to hate thoſe that impoſe upon us, and a little Hatred is ſufficient to hinder us from judging equitably. Be it as it will, and without any Prepoſſeſſion either for or againſt the *French*, this muſt be own'd, that by a ſlender Knowledge of them, we eaſily diſcover that their over-valuing Wit, Behaviour, and Outſide, makes them neglect what is ſolid, that they are fond of Trifles, and that, generally ſpeaking, they don't know the Value of Things.

'Tis even apparent, that by their Neglect of cultivating good Senſe, and valuing it enough, they are apt to miſtake it; for if it be not accompany'd with Expreſſions and Ways to ſet it off to Advantage, they are often ſo far deceiv'd as to take it for Stupidity. We have ſeen their Men of Wit perplex'd with the good Senſe and Coolneſs of a Stranger, without knowing the Reaſon of their Perplexity. They muſt be much more embarraſs'd when a Man of known Merit does not ſhew much Wit; I believe thoſe that obſerve this Defect in him, whiſper it to their Friends as a Thing that ought to be kept ſecret. They are eager after Fame, and moſt of them look upon it as the ultimate End of Merit. This is another

Effect

Effect of their ſmall Regard for good Senſe, and their ſetting too high a Value on Vivacity, Wit, and Outſide. Thus they ſeek after that Kind of Merit, more than any other, that makes the greateſt Noiſe; or they ſeek rather after Noiſe, which they look upon to be inſeparable from Merit. As for that which conſiſts in renouncing Chimeras and extravagant Deſigns, and leading a quiet and private Life, or that which is its own Reward and ſelf-ſufficient, they look upon them as fine Ideas to be found no where but in Books; and the Name of a Philoſopher, or a Man that would reduce his Ideas to Practice, is with them a Kind of an Affront. Accordingly we find no Philoſophy in their Character; ſo they feed themſelves with Shew, and prefer the Pleaſure of the Outſide to what is real, if I may be allow'd to ſay ſo, without philoſophizing too much; and 'tis obſerv'd, that, on many Occaſions, they would have their Happineſs conſiſt in being thought happy. They are better pleas'd in being well cloath'd, than eating well; to be at great Expences, in order to be thought rich, even at the Hazard of confounding their Riches; to expoſe them to Danger, rather than preſerve or enjoy them with Moderation, without appearing rich. Thoſe that are ſucceſsful in their Attempts upon Women, or would be thought ſo, and that have the envied Title of the Women's Favourites to encourage them the more, acknowledge that they would rather be look'd upon as Favourites with the Women, tho' they were not ſo, than be really in their Favour, without being thought ſo. Theſe Gentlemen make a conſiderable Body in *France*, by their numbers; in which they reckon every Man that is well made; ſo that by mentioning

tioning them, I prove more than appear'd at firſt.

In this Country, as well as in others, tho' perhaps not ſo generally, People are ſtrangely intoxicated with the Thing call'd Quality; and tho' the *French* are not ſo exact, nor capable of bringing as many Proofs of their Nobility as the *Germans*, they are however ſo full of their Titles, that they think there's ſome real good in them; the People believe it too, and bear with Eaſe the Diſdain, which they look upon as the Conſequence of a well grounded Subordination. Theſe Gentlemen carry this Notion of their Quality ſo far, that even in extream Poverty, to which great Numbers of them are reduc'd, they are ſo obſtinate, that they will not help themſelves either by Work or Trade, and have no other Reſources but War, Marriage, and the Court. In other Reſpects they look upon Idleneſs as their beſt Privilege, and the moſt eſſential Diſtinction between them and the Tradeſmen, with whom they would have nothing in common, were it poſſible. The *French* are very fond of Authority and Command, which make another Diſtinction. They buy Employments very dear, to pleaſe themſelves that Way; they never think of running in Debt, or being ruin'd, provided they get above thoſe that were their Equals, and make a great Figure in the World. What can they do more? As the Taſte of the Nation is bent on theſe Employments, there muſt be conſequently a great Number of them, and ſome are often created to make them ſtill greater. But if the Officers of Juſtice are very numerous in *France*, thoſe that go to Law and are ruin'd by it, are numberleſs; the *French* have undoubtedly more litigious People than any Nation in the World.

World. When we conſider this double Folly, we can't well avoid calling to mind two ridiculous Perſons in one of their Comedies; and one is under ſome Temptation of making a more general Application of the Verſe which characterizes them:

One is always a Client, the other always a Judge.

The *French* don't think much of Liberty; they are not ſatisfy'd to depend on the Prince in every thing they ſuffer themſelves to be depriv'd of, but ſubmit, even thro' Inclination, in that which is the moſt independant Thing that Men are poſſeſs'd of, and have the leaſt Power to give away. A Word that falls from him, or is ſpoke by chance, is magnified, and becomes the Subject of a Deciſion, that ſets a Value on Men and Things. Whatever Share of Liberty the Prince has left them, they ſacrifice to Cuſtom, to which they are Slaves. They make Cuſtom, the Queen of the Country, the great Queen, no leſs than their King, the great King. *'Tis ſo! 'Tis not ſo!* are their ſacred Reaſons to approve or condemn any thing; and 'tis a bold Action in *France*, that gives occaſion to any one to ſay, *Is it not ſo?* if he has Courage enough to revolt any way againſt the Nation, by replying; *'Tis ſo*, for *I did it.* There's however a *French Liberty*, and no doubt but you have often heard this Word, which they reſpect, and pronounce with a loud Voice in foreign Countries. This Liberty is no more than to have Courage to diſpenſe with ſome of their Laws of Politeneſs, and not to be more formal than is proper; for a Man to be ſo daring as to lean in his Elbow Chair, when he is weary with ſitting upright;

to

to ask for Meat and Drink at all Times, among ones Acquaintance; to say that the Wine is good, when 'tis not so; and to do other Things of like Importance. If there's any room for laughing to think the Liberty of a Nation should consist in this, there's undoubtedly much more Reason to laugh, to see Nations where 'tis not.

They are very exact here in all the trifling Duties of Life: People take a great deal of Care to inform themselves about a Person's Health, after a small fatigue, and 'tis a Point of Civility to send him a Compliment upon it. An honest Man is not more scrupulous in returning a Pledge left in his Hands, than a *French* Man in returning a Visit. To make and receive them is one of their chief Occupations, and they think their Time well employ'd that way; a Life which they pass in Company is, in their Opinion, a Life agreeably spent, and in Order. Man, say they, is made for Society; and they are forming this Society all their Days, and will have it consist of great or small Companies, where they give one another an Opportunity of becoming Men. They almost think every Man an *Owl*, or a *Philosopher*, that discovers any Inclination for Solitude, not being able to comprehend how 'tis possible for any one not to be pleas'd with Conversation, where a great many polite and obliging Things are said. They are likewise very watchful for any Opportunity of employing a thousand little far-fetch'd Ways, that are become natural, as it were, by Custom, and by which they pretend to please. All this put together, makes up that magnificent Name which they call the *Art of Living*, and which they have Reason to call so, since they look upon it as the great

great Concern of Life, and that they don't ſeem to live for any other End.

People of this Complexion muſt neceſſarily value a Court Life at a high rate, and prefer it to any other; which is another Singularity in the Character of the *French*. They are Courtiers by Inclination, and, if I may ſay ſo, by Birth: They are pleas'd with obeying, and commanding; they admire Things eaſily, and a little Outſide is ſufficient to employ them: They think of nothing but to impoſe upon People, and to be thought happy, and they let others impoſe upon them, in their Turn, for they look upon themſelves to be happy, if they can paſs on the World as ſuch. Theſe noble Diſpoſitions are ſtill ſtrengthen'd more and more by the Form of the Government, which is ſuch in *France*, that every thing depends on the Court. So that Inclination and Intereſt, which are two powerful Motives, concur here to make great Numbers of People chooſe this kind of Life, and ſucceed in it. If a great Man that is a Courtier happens to give the King any Offence, and that he orders him to retire, that is, to go and live on his Eſtate, the very ſame Eſtate that he has taken the greateſt Pains to improve, and adorn; yet he thinks himſelf an Exile: He languiſhes from the Time he becomes his own Maſter; Leiſure and Liberty make him unhappy. The *Count de Buſſi*, who made himſelf famous by his Writings, is a Proof of this: Some pretty Stories maliciouſly wrote, were the Occaſion of his Baniſhment from the Court; and tho' one might think that a Writer ſhou'd not fear Retirement, it did not, however, agree with him; he wou'd write no more than what tended to get him out of it. The Letters which he ſent to

the King are publiſh'd; oh! what Submiſſions, what Efforts to be reſtored to Favour! But when he found there was no Hopes of ſucceeding, he became inconſolable, and fell upon writing Morals towards the End of his Days. He compos'd a ſmall Treatiſe of it, wherein, after demonſtrating, by ſeveral Examples, that great Men are generally unhappy, and that Providence makes uſe of all ſorts of Adverſity to make them ſenſible of the Vanity of worldly Affairs, he puts himſelf at laſt in the ſame Rank, and writes the Hiſtory of his own Life: He derives his Grandeur from the Poſts he had in the King's Armies, that is, from many Years Service, and looks upon his Baniſhment from Court as his Unhappineſs, that is to ſay, many Years Liberty. There's a *Frenchman* for you made for Society, and to live with the Great, but ſo uneaſy that he can't live with himſelf; I deſire no other Proof of the little Value of this Wit, Politeneſs, and Behaviour that they make ſuch a Noiſe about: All theſe Things are neither uſeful nor agreeable, but in the Commerce of Life, on which they make us dependant; and every Man that has no other Qualities, which is the Caſe of moſt of thoſe that ſtudy them, is in a Manner loſt when he is alone: He is abandon'd by himſelf, as ſoon as he is abandon'd by others.

But 'tis not only the Nobility that are attach'd to the Court, and prefer this Way of Living to all others; but, generally, People of all Ranks in *France* have a ſtrong Paſſion to puſh their Fortunes, in which they ſucceed better than others: They travel thro' all Nations with that Deſign, they find a Way of getting Acceſs to all Houſes, and putting themſelves into all Shapes. Even the mean People, that in other Countries think

think of nothing more than Subſiſtance, are here poſſeſs'd with the Fancy of growing Great; and ſome one has remark'd, merrily enough, that *France* furniſhes all *Europe* with *Valets de Chambre* and *Cooks*, being the Employments that make People's Fortunes. The Governors to young Men, Dancing-Maſters, Fencing-Maſters, Engineers, are almoſt every where *Frenchmen*; and if People are wanted for any other Occupations, it is poſſible there may be found in all Parts of *France* ſuch as will be very ready to undertake them. There needs no more to know the *French*, than to examine the good and bad Qualities that are requiſite to make a Fortune, that forms their Character: Firſt, I think there muſt be Complaiſance, Aſſurance, and Forwardneſs, and that there be nothing either above or below a Man. Theſe are, in effect, the Talents of the *French*, by which they get very much the Start of the Adventurers of other Nations, when they are Competitors. They are always buſy about ſmall Matters, that ſeem to them conſiderable; they think themſelves very well employ'd, and are ſeldom undeceiv'd in one Trifle but by another. One may ſay, without wronging the *French* Nation, that 'tis among them a *Bagatelle* is in its Kingdom, and that they do it more Honour than any where elſe. But on the other Hand, they may well boaſt of bringing it to Perfection in ſeveral things, and ſurpaſſing all the World in this reſpect.

I now return to that which forms the principal Character of the *French*, their *brillant* Wit, or I muſt rather tell you what Advantage they have by it, ſince they are no leſs diſtinguiſh'd by it from others than by Wit itſelf. When I obſerve to you that 'tis on that Account they

think themſelves the firſt Nation in the World, and made to be admired, you may think, perhaps, that 'tis becauſe they muſt have more People of Wit than are to be met with elſewhere. But that, Sir, is not the Reaſon. The *French* are witty in general, the Nation ſhines with it, and their Wits have no other Advantage than to be the firſt among their Equals. You will ſay then you underſtand by this, that Nations have the Advantage of each other, and are diſtinguiſhed by *the more* and *the leſs*. As the *French* have more Wit, and the *Engliſh* more good Senſe, with other Advantages: But you have not found it out yet. The *French* have not only more Wit than other People; but they have Wit, and others have none. As the *Greeks* diſtinguiſhed themſelves formerly from all other Nations, not according to *the more* and *the leſs*, but abſolutely without the Degrees of Compariſon, and look'd upon all other People as *Barbarians*, ſo the *French* diſtinguiſh themſelves now from the reſt of the World: They are the *Greeks* of our Times, and other Nations ſerve them for Proverbs. If other Men happen to have any Wit, and that it can't be contradicted, then they ſay 'tis not impoſſible but there may be ſome in the World that reſemble the *French*. Their Title to Wit (as a Thing that is their Property) is ſo well eſtabliſhed among them, that I am perſuaded, a *Frenchman*, tho' ever ſo little conceited, and that has no great Opinion of himſelf, with Regard to his own Countrymen, will make no Heſitation, at the ſame time, to think he has more Wit than any Stranger, and that he need go no further, than not to mortify us unſeaſonably, by treating a *German* as if it were in his own Power to become a *Frenchman*. They extend this Act of Juſtice

Juſtice ſo far as even to allow we have good Senſe, which they think may be found in all Countries, and which they leave us as the Remnant or Dregs of Wit, but think it ſufficient to ſecure us from the Contempt of thoſe that have Wit. You ſee, Sir, what 'tis that ſaves us from the Contempt of the *French*, even ſuch of them as are the Glory of the Nation, and vouchſafe to take ſo much Notice of other Men, as to make Compariſons which gives them a better Reliſh of the Prerogative they poſſeſs. But tho' they ſhould think themſelves above us in every thing, ſo far as even to deſpiſe us, which may ſometimes happen, it would be wrong in us to take it ill or to call them to an Account for a Superiority which is generally eſtabliſh'd among them, and which they have receiv'd from their Fathers. Few of them find any Occaſions of renouncing it; and 'tis certain there are not many in a Condition to take the Advantage of ſuch Opportunities as offer. Let us leave theſe *Frenchmen* in Poſſeſſion of their Character in its utmoſt Extent, let us make a Party, and laugh at Opinion with every thing it eſtabliſhes among Men. In Conſequence of a Partition that gives Wit to ſome and leaves good Senſe to others, Men of Wit ought to be allow'd to raiſe themſelves above diſcreet judicious People and to make a Jeſt of them, and theſe ſhould be hinder'd from finding Fault with it. On the other Hand, People of good Senſe ought to be permitted to make Uſe of it to examine the Manners and Ways of the others, and to ſet a Price upon them. I embrace You, Sir, *&c.*

LETTER II.

Am ſtill writing to you, Sir, about the *French*; and what I have not accompliſh'd in my laſt Letter, I will in this: I'll tell you what Good can be ſaid of them, as well as the Ill, and I hope Things will happen accordingly, and am preparing to write to you with Pleaſure.

The *French* have match'd their Character very well, and form'd a convenient and regular Plan of Life in its Kind; that is, with Regard to Society, to which their Inclinations lead them. They have not all theſe ſtarch'd Ways that are diſagreeable in Company, and no doubt have been introduc'd thro' a Defect of Friendſhip and Confidence. They have not that falſe and affected Gravity, which rather conceals the Want of Merit, than Merit itſelf. They don't entangle themſelves in continual Formalities; they make no Preſents to one another, but ſuch as may be well receiv'd, and which are as ſo many Snares for thoſe that accept of them. They don't interrupt a Man that is diſcourſing of the common Concerns of Life by Compliments; they know how ridiculous 'tis, and on ſuch Occaſions where they are neceſſary, they make them in few Words. We are not perplex'd about chuſing their Titles, and giving them magnificent ones, againſt the Grain; we are excus'd for a plain *Monſieur*, which ſerves for all every where, eſpecially

eſpecially from a Stranger. They have a great many decent and becoming Ways, that are always the ſame, to which 'tis eaſy for one to conform himſelf, and which we adopt with Pleaſure; and there's no doubt but *France* is the Country where every thing that is decent and ornamental in Society is beſt known. 'Tis Pity they don't ſtop here, and that they ſhould add a great Number of Niceties and fantaſtical Ways, that vary and depend on the Faſhion, to proper and ſettled Rules of Decency. Theſe Whimſies are very perplexing and troubleſome to a Stranger, that is unacquainted with them, and is deſirous of accommodating himſelf to the Ways of the Country. 'Tis true they are civil enough to over-look our Miſtakes in Things of that Kind, as well as thoſe we make in ſpeaking their Language, which is too difficult for us; and 'tis what they may well do, ſince 'tis impoſſible for us to follow them in all their Fineſſes, which require more Attention than any Language or Behaviour are worth. They not only paſs by ſuch ſort of Errors as theſe, but even give themſelves the Trouble of correcting them, when they think we are grown familiar enough with them to bear it. They take a great deal of Pleaſure in all Reſpects to reprove and inſtruct a young Stranger that is docible, and are very ready to receive him into their Favour; and by all theſe Civilities to Strangers, 'tis very obvious, that they know the Duties of Life, in order to put them in Practice. I remember when I ſerv'd in the Army, which was then canton'd near *Verſailes*, I went out to ſhoot, and happen'd to fire at ſome Partridges very near a fine Houſe. It belong'd to a Gentleman that then dwelt in it, and that was retired from Court. He came towards me, and obſerving I

was a Stranger, he invited me Home to refreſh myſelf. The Viſit paſs'd in Compliments, without the leaſt Notice of my ſhooting; and at my ſecond Viſit, he let me know, after a friendly and polite Manner, my rude Behaviour, which gave Occaſion to our Acquaintance; ſo that this raſh and inconſiderate Action, inſtead of provoking him, ſerv'd only to let him underſtand I was a young Man that wanted his Advice. He gave me Inſtructions about my Behaviour, and ſhew'd me a great deal of Kindneſs all the Time I continu'd in his Neighbourhood. The *Frenchman* has a ſtrong Biaſs to Friendſhip, as well to the cloſe and ſtrong Band, which properly deſerves that Name, as to the agreeable Commerce of Acquaintance, to which 'tis likewiſe given, and he acquits himſelf handſomely of the Duties it requires. But, generally ſpeaking, his Inclination is too quick, and inſtead of eſtabliſhing Friendſhip by little and little, 'tis ſuddenly enflam'd, and comes to its higheſt Period in a few Days. From hence you may well imagine that 'tis not durable; accordingly we find they are charg'd with being inconſtant, and fond of new Acquaintance. But 'tis too ſoon yet to conclude ſpeaking of their Virtues.

'Tis certain that we Strangers meet with every thing among the *French*, that we can expect in a Country where we travel, and in many Reſpects all that the *French* themſelves can meet with. They don't repulſe thoſe that deſire their Acquaintance, and let a Stranger's Behaviour be never ſo indifferent, they will make no Difficulty, however, of procuring him other Acquaintances, and in general, all the agreeable Things he can wiſh for in a ſtrange Country. A *Frenchman* enters into ſtrict Friendſhip with a Stranger,

Stranger, that he likes, as eaſily as with another *Frenchman*. At three Days End he offers him his Purſe, if he wants it, and will do every thing for his new Friend, who does not expect ſo much Kindneſs, and can ſcarce think it poſſible, or at leaſt that none in his own Country had done ſo much for him. But laying aſide theſe particular Inſtances of extraordinary Friendſhip, we cannot avoid being ſatisfy'd with the kind Reception they give us, for it may be affirm'd, there are but few Strangers that don't paſs their Time as agreeably in *France* as in their own Country, and wiſh to be treated at Home as they are by the *French*, who are influenc'd by no other Motive than an obliging Temper, and the civil and polite Character ſo peculiar to the Nation. 'Tis true, if the Matter be examin'd narrowly, it will appear that their Politeneſs conceals ſome Sentiments we have no Reaſon to be entirely pleas'd with: We may ſay they are obliging to us much after the ſame Manner as the Men are to the Women, that they treat us as inferiour and weak Creatures, who have a right to be conſider'd with a particular Regard, but that ought not to leſſen our Obligations to them, ſince they may well diſpenſe with treating us politely, becauſe they can't have Pleaſure enough by our Acquaintance to make it worth their Time to be circumſpect, or put themſelves under any Conſtraint on our Account. Beſides, there's more than bare Politeneſs in their Conduct towards Strangers: They are very ready to believe us, at leaſt the People of *Paris*, with whom we are beſt acquainted, and I am of Opinion, this is pretty much the Character of the Nation in general. Tho' they ſuffer conſiderable Loſſes by Cheats, that take Advantage of their Eaſineſs, it creates no Diffidence in them

them towards others; at leaſt, they don't ſeem to trouble themſelves with any Precautions; in which Reſpect they ſhew more Humanity than the *Engliſh*, who are often very harſh to Strangers, without giving themſelves the Time to conſider their Circumſtances.

People that behave themſelves ſo handſomely to Strangers, muſt conſequently do ſo to one another; or rather, that by being accuſtom'd to do mutual good Offices to one another, they come to treat Strangers after the ſame Manner, and to put them on a Level with the People of the Country. One may at leaſt give this Encomium to their beſt Societies, that is all thoſe that are call'd *Polite People*, and are diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt, by making a conſiderable Figure in the World. They are generally very complaiſant to one another, and ready, on Occaſion, to aſſiſt both with their Credit and Purſes; and when it was the Cuſtom of the Country, they aſſiſted one another with their Swords. Thoſe that have neither Money nor Credit, beſtow freely their Pains and Trouble. Their Manner of obliging is expeditious and genteel, they love to prevent People's aſking, and readily diſpenſe with any Thanks or Compliments which we think we owe them for their Kindneſs. I have known ſome Occaſions where their good Inclinations carry'd them very far, even to that Kind of Heroiſm, which of all others is no doubt the beſt. I ſpeak of thoſe People that deſire nothing with more Vehemence than to be uſeful, and to oblige all the World, hunting after any one that wants their Aſſiſtance, any unhappy Wretches, in order to relieve and comfort them, and that intereſt themſelves for all thoſe they find in that Condition, with as much Warmth as they could

ſhew

ſhew for a Friend or a Brother; and they employ their Wealth and their Lives after that Manner. We likewiſe obſerve another Kind of Heroiſm among them, which is more common, I mean that which regards their Bravery, wherein they don't give place to any Nation: The *French* Nobility reckon it the firſt of all the Qualities that diſtinguiſh them from the People, and they give Proofs of it ſometimes. We have ſeen ſome of their young Gentlemen, that are form'd into Companies, leap from the top of a Baſtion, to aſſiſt their Friends that were engag'd, riſquing their Necks by the Fall, to be kill'd in the Fight, or at laſt to loſe their Lives, in caſe the Thing happen'd to be diſcover'd. I own there's ſome Exceſs in all this, and that their Bravery, might be better employ'd; but there's ſomething noble and generous even in this Exceſs: 'Tis only proper in young People, and 'tis in favour of Friendſhip it ought to be cultivated. The *French* know what 'tis perfectly well, as I have obſerv'd already, and it deſerves to be repeated to their Honour. On great as well as ſmall Occaſions, they pique themſelves in doing every thing they ought for their Friends, and the generous Temper, ſo peculiar to the Nation, makes all their Devoirs very extenſive. 'Tis this that renders the *French*, if not the beſt Friends in the World, (which perhaps might be too much to ſay of them) at leaſt the moſt attentive to the Duties of Friendſhip, and perhaps the Nation where there's the greateſt Number of Friends.

But there's ſomething very whimſical at the ſame time in all this; the *French* are ſo far from pretending to any Encomium on Account of this generous Temper, which People would be very ready to applaud, and by that in ſome Meaſure diſcharge

diſcharge their Obligations, that we ſee the Title of *a good natur'd Man*, or a *good natur'd Woman*, taken in an ill Senſe, and look'd upon as a Kind of Affront, that inſinuates nothing leſs than an Idiot, a ſimple Man, which of all things is what they would leaſt reſemble in this Country. 'Tis for their Wit (which, generally ſpeaking, they look upon as the Oppoſite of good Nature) that the *French* would be applauded, even at the hazard of being compared to the *Devil*, which is one of the Expreſſions made uſe of on theſe Occaſions. It ſhews at the ſame Time what Kind of Wit they eſteem, and how far they examine what Generoſity is, or its true Value, which is little known among them. This we may ſay of the *French*, that they are ſo ignorant of their own Advantages, that they reſemble the Stag in the Fable, that values himſelf on his lofty Horns, which may be fatal to him; and is aſham'd at the ſame Time of his ſmall Legs, that are very ſerviceable to him. This whimſical Humour of the *French* deſerves to be remark'd the more, becauſe in the neighbouring Nations, that are troubled with the Plague of copying after them, a great many begin to be aſhamed of their Generoſity, and endeavour to keep themſelves clear of it. 'Tis to little Purpoſe to tell them, that a dull heavy Fellow is ſeldom good, and that Malice is oftener a Mark of Folly, than Goodneſs is; that it were even better for a Man to be call'd a Blockhead, with an honeſt Heart, than a Man of Wit, with a bad one. Reaſoning is of no Uſe among all theſe People, againſt any Expreſſions that are in Vogue: They ſtrictly obſerve that Saying, which is grown into a Proverb, that *'tis better to be a Knave than a Fool*; and it often happens, that by endeavouring to redeem themſelves

ſelves from Folly, by Malice, they join both together, and then become wicked Fools. When they ſhew any Contempt for a Perſon, 'tis uſual with them then to ſay, *He is a good natur'd Prince*, as if it were awkward in a Prince, more than others, to be peaceable and good. But that is their Buſineſs; they know what it is; I mean the Merit of a Prince, which is grounded on the brighteſt Qualities. But with Regard to private People, they muſt give us Leave to juſtify ourſelves againſt their bad Proverbs, and always to look on Generoſity, not only as that which forms a very good Character, but likewiſe as the beſt Thing that belongs to their Nation, and as the Fountain of all their good Qualities, that deſerve either Applauſe or Imitation.

To Generoſity the *French* have join'd Frankneſs, which may perhaps be the Conſequence of it, and this Quality alone might well deſerve a Panegyrick, and ſuffice to ground the Nations upon, which I would undertake with Pleaſure, had Panegyricks been my principal Deſign; but you, Sir, want nothing but a bare Relation, for you make theſe Encomiums yourſelf. Among the *French*, *Frankneſs*, and to ſet off all the Copiouſneſs they have enriched their Language with, and is much to their Honour, *Sincerity*, *Honeſty*, *Integrity*, *Candour*, *Probity*, *Rectitude*, *Cordiality*, *Openneſs*, *to be down right*, and in a Word, *to be plain and free*, ſeem to be all fix'd to the Character of a Gentleman, even without ſpeaking of any others but the People of Politeneſs, with which their Country ſwarms. If all of them don't really poſſeſs theſe Qualities, which I dare not take upon me to ſay, they do them at leaſt ſome Homage, by the Shew they make of them; and this chiefly produces a certain

tain Behaviour that is peculiar to the Nation: I am even of Opinion, 'tis from thence that the Number of Gentlemen appears to be ſo great in *France*. Nothing is more neceſſary to procure that Title, than an Air of Frankneſs, becauſe nothing agrees better with a Gentleman than to be free and open, and nothing is more common in *France*; every one aſſumes it, tho' properly the *French* Air, and a reſerv'd Man appears to them ſomewhat ſingular and ſtrange. They had Reaſon to derive the *French* Name from *Frank*, their firſt Name, and which they have only lengthen'd a little. And to lengthen their Encomium, I ſay there are more raſh and heedleſs People in *France* than in other Countries, and yet they are leſs ridiculous; which no doubt ought to be much to their Honour, ſince a heedleſs unthinking Man is not only the leaſt to be fear'd in a Society, but likewiſe the moſt agreeable, when he keeps within ſome Compaſs, and is without Deſign. The Generoſity ſo peculiar to the *French*, which is the Foundation of their Character, and the *Frankneſs* that matches it ſo compleatly, are the Ornaments of the Nation. Should they cultivate theſe Qualities as much as they deſerve, and make them the Center of the Advantage which they pretend to have of other Nations, People would be tempted to grant it.

There are ſeveral Things in this Nation worthy of Praiſe; but ſince they are the ſame in other Countries, I proceed to ſuch as characterize the *French* in a more particular Manner. The Education of Children may be reckon'd among the chief. The Care which they take in that is much to their Honour. They let their Children be about them, without endeavouring to get rid of them, even when they are in Company. They hear

hear them, and anſwer them after a rational Manner; they likewiſe endeavour to gain by Gentleneſs what in other Countries would be done by Authority and Force. 'Tis a Pity, ſince they underſtand the Matter ſo well, that they have not greater Things in View. For, in Effect, the *French* make their Children learn Cuſtoms before Principles; and ſome becoming Ways, that are handſome enough for the preſent, before any thing that may ſerve as a Rule to them for the Time to come.

They ſet too high a Price on ſuch Things as make a good Outſide, Behaviour, and Appearance, and too ſmall a Price on Qualities that are more eſſential, I mean thoſe of the Heart; or at leaſt they make them very unequal. By this they lead their Children into miſtakes, and Nature inclines them to the eaſieſt Things; to learn Behaviour before the Duties of Life; to be pleas'd with what is in Vogue, rather than what is plain and natural. Does not this Method of moulding Children put you in mind of that which was practiced by an antient Statuary, in caſting his Statues? He did not know (ſays the Poet) how to give them their juſt Proportions, but he excell'd in finiſhing the Hair and Nails: So in *France* we ſee the Effects of their irregular Care. The young Men become Libertines, and abandon themſelves to every kind of Exceſs, as ſoon as they are ripe for it; and I believe one may ſay, without the Fear of being miſtaken, that the Youth of *France* are the moſt lively and debauch'd in *Europe*. To be guilty of a hundred Exceſſes, to obſerve no Decorum, to rally and turn every thing that offers into Ridicule, is the Character which may be given to moſt of them. They ſtrive to out-do one another

ther in these Ways, as if they were proper to young Men, and they succeed to Admiration. This Evil, which is almost general, ought to learn the *French* that even good Sentiments, without some other Foundation than Honour and Decorum, are not a sufficient Preservative against Corruption and Debauchery, where there's generally ill Company. One would imagine that the *French* must observe enough, on those Occasions, to put them out of Conceit with the Vivacity they value at such a Rate, and which they cultivate in their Children in lieu of moderating it. But I must tell you, likewise, that 'tis no extraordinary Thing in *France* to see some of these young People, which are so extravagant and plung'd in Debauchery, become afterwards very polite, and addict themselves to Good, as they did formerly to Evil; and one might say, that great Numbers of them had not been guilty of all kinds of Excess in their Youth, but with a View of knowing them, and hating them the more afterwards.

There's something very singular in the Character of the *French*, and distinguishes them from all other Nations; that is their Course of Life, consisting in Visits. This Article, which I have hinted at already by the by, deserves to be enlarg'd upon in a particular Manner; I don't speak of Visits which Friends make to one another, to pass away some Hours together, and enjoy the Sweetness of Friendship. I believe the same Thing is done in all Countries, and if the *French* have any Advantage of other Nations in this Respect, 'tis because they have a stronger Inclination to be communicative, and that Society is their only Study. They have establish'd Visits of another Kind, which are more general, where there's

there's room to obſerve ſome of the moſt remarkable Things in the Character of their Nation: Theſe are the frequent Viſits which they make every Day, as Work to be done, or as if there were ſick People to be viſited. All People of Education, and that dreſs genteely, make and receive Viſits, of which they keep Accounts as of an Affair in Trade; and among the exact Duties becoming a Gentleman, they reckon that which regards Viſits as one. They muſt be made after a handſome and genteel Manner, and free from all Trouble or Perplexity; ſuch as would embarraſs ordinary People, if they happen'd to be in any Place where they had nothing to do, and among People to whom they had nothing to ſay. Thoſe that underſtand the World, that is, thoſe that know what is eſſential in it, are out of the Caſe, and that they may never be in it, they have agreed among themſelves to make ſhort Viſits; they do no more than ſhew themſelves to the Perſons they come to ſee, and as ſoon as they are ſeen, (eſpecially if others happen to come in) they retire. The Converſation, during the Minute the Viſit continues, muſt be kept up, as much as if they had ſomething to ſay to one another, and it generally is, tho' we don't ſee what 'tis that ſupports it, there being nothing, properly ſpeaking, that can be called a Subject for Converſation, and in this lies all the Cunning. There People ſhew themſelves on their beſt Side, that is their Wit, if they have any, and every one in this Country has more or leſs of it; for Viſits have their proper Stile, which is as much owing to Rote, as what is free or natural, and the firſt ſeldom fails here. None but a Man of good Senſe,

and a Stranger to the Company, can be embarraſs'd at theſe Viſits; but ſuch a Perſon may come off very well after another Manner: Silence is allow'd on theſe Occaſions, while any one is ſpeaking, and a Man is always ſure to find ſomebody ſpeaking at the viſiting Hours; that is, that a Man may be a Spectator if he pleaſes, and that this Theatrical Way of acting is allow'd of in *France*. 'Tis very convenient for Strangers, and ſeems to be eſtabliſh'd purpoſely for their uſe, and 'tis abſolutely neceſſary that Strangers ſhould be Spectators at theſe Viſits, conſidering how they are manag'd. And it may be even true, that Strangers firſt introduced this Method, and that the *French* may have Reaſon to accuſe us of bringing a fantaſtical Humour into their Art of Living; but be it as it will, there are ſome *French* that adopt it for their own, and act the Part of a Stranger, and pleaſe themſelves with the Shew; whether they really find any ſatisfaction in it, which is not impoſſible, or that Silence at a Viſit looks like a Mark of Diſtinction, which they take a great deal of Pride in. For tho' a *Frenchman* avoids Singularity in ſome Things that are not regular, he looks for it, however, in others, wherein he expects to meet with ſome that may have the ſame Taſte, and ſets himſelf off by this Method as a Man that marches at the Head of others.

Some People appear at Viſits to ſhew their Finery, which is properly the Thing to be ſhewn, being eſſential to the *Beau Monde*; and 'tis to it they chiefly owe their Title. Finery is eſtabliſh'd in *France* more than any where elſe, and I believe it contributes to give a Currency to the Trade of viſiting as much as Wit does,

does, and perhaps more, tho' there were nothing elſe in it, but Novelty and Eaſineſs of changing, in which it has the Advantage of Wit. The *French* are much indebted on this Account to the Women, who leave their Houſes, and run to ſhew themſelves as well as the Men; when I ſay run, I mean an honourable Race, in a Coach, with a ſplendid Equipage ſuitable to the reſt. This Circumſtance contributes much to ſet off Finery, and to carry it even as far as Magnificence; for the Coach, together with fine Cloaths, makes even Women triumph, and expoſes them every Day as a Shew to the People. This is the Reaſon that dreſſing is their chief Employment, they refine upon it above any thing I can ſay. 'Tis true, that with all their Care to adorn themſelves, yet they no way depend upon it, and that they run no riſque in making all the Eſſays they can think of. In other Countries the Women are diffident of their Charms, and know themſelves too well to neglect any thing in their Dreſs. But here they are not tied to ſo much Circumſpection; 'tis almoſt indifferent to them to cover or uncover themſelves, to have their Gowns figur'd with Flowers, or with Dragons and Furies. All turns equally to their Advantage, and whatever Way they dreſs themſelves, they are ſtill fine; they have always ſomething new upon them, and they pleaſe a-new the Men for whom they dreſs themſelves, and who dreſs themſelves for them in their Turn. I don't know whether the Women in this Country, who make as publick a Figure as the Men, whom they ſee every Day, have communicated their Taſte for Finery to them, or whether the Men like it becauſe 'tis the Guſt of the Nation; but what-

ever the Reaſon is, 'tis certain, that the Men take as much Care to be fine as the Women, and that they become it as well; that dreſſing for Viſits, and viſiting to ſhew their Dreſs, are the common Employments of all the People, call'd in *France* the *Beau Monde*, which are conſiderable enough to induce me to tell you ſomething of them with the utmoſt Exactneſs.

The *Beau Monde* put themſelves forward, and keep the Vulgar at a great Diſtance; not only on account of the Rank which Nature gives them, but alſo for the eminent Figure they make in the World; and their great Expences, which muſt not be calculated with too much Exactneſs; and for the Diverſions they procure for themſelves from Day to Day, which they enjoy with more Delicacy than the Crowd. But the Way of living of the *Beau Monde* is chiefly ſupported by the Mixture of Men and Women, which is (as it were) its Foundation and Band. This is it that ſets off the Art of Living, and the *French* Gallantry to Advantage. 'Tis by this, that the Inclination which both Sexes have naturally for each other, is awak'd and ſet to work. 'Tis by the ſame Way that the Advantages of each Sex appear with Splendour; the Deſire of pleaſing animates them, and 'tis here that the *French* Liberty is in its proper Station, and does Wonders. As they leave the Crowd the groſs Pleaſures which they diſdain, or at leaſt profeſs to do ſo, the greateſt Part of them likewiſe leave to another Sort of People that Kind of tireſome Converſation, that turns upon *Morals*; which is ſuppos'd here not to be naturally agreeable to any one's Taſte, or at leaſt to thoſe that have any. This is ſo well eſtabliſh'd among the greateſt Number of the

Beau

Beau Monde, that the Word *Moralize* is apt to be taken in an ill Senſe; it imports *cenſuring*, or *unſeaſonable refining*; and you know very well that in *France* when an Expreſſion authorizes Cuſtom, 'tis out of all Danger. I believe we muſt, after all, paſs by this Diſlike of theirs, and ſtill look upon them as People of good Senſe, that keep up their Way of Living, and know very well how to ſhun every Thing that is diſagreeable. They can likewiſe diſcern what is agreeable. The *Beau Monde* have a Syſtem of Morality of their own, which they put in the room of the other, that is rigid and grown out of Date: Their Morality is gay and airy, it excites Joy, and maintains the Neceſſity of making the beſt of our Time, which paſſes away with ſo much Swiftneſs, and ends our happy Days when they are ſcarce begun. What they give out freely in Diſcourſe on this Topick is not ſufficient, there are ſome Works writ in a fine Stile to prove it, and to encourage weak People that ſuffer themſelves to be carry'd away by unſeaſonable Doubts. It muſt be own'd after all, that we may do worſe than enjoy ourſelves, and the Sweets of Life, and 'tis, no doubt, in the *Beau Monde*, rather than out of it, that we muſt reliſh them. They are Enemies to Formality and Conſtraint, and give themſelves up to a mutual and gentle Familiarity, that affords them an Opportunity of opening themſelves to one another without any Diſtruſt. The Collations, Gaming, Entertainments, Singing, and other Diverſions are Part of their Morality, and they reckon Variety among the Pleaſures by which they ſubſiſt: 'Tis there the new Faſhions appear and gain the Society the Reſpect of the Publick; and

there, alſo, new Ways of ſpeaking are introduced to embelliſh Converſation. As the Wit of theſe Societies is form'd on the Books that are in vogue, ſo the Books, on the other hand, are form'd on their ſparkling and airy Converſation. Theſe two Things circulate Wit and genteel Behaviour in *France*, and diſcover the greateſt Abilities of the *Beau Monde*. The ſmalleſt Village has its *Beau Monde*, who diſtinguiſh themſelves from others, and keep up the Honour of the Place and the Nation. And 'tis not the young People only that compoſe theſe Societies; even the aged are no leſs pleaſed with them, and think they are no way unfit for them; or more properly, the People of Pleaſure and Gaity in *France* never grow old; they always preſerve the Character of Youth, and reliſh Pleaſure to the laſt.

What can a Man ſay of all this? Muſt we gallantly place the Courſe of Life of the *Beau Monde* among the Things that ought to be admir'd in *France*? Or ſhall we examine it like *Philoſophers*, or People that *Moralize* and propoſe it as a Queſtion? Shall we grant that to paſs away Life agreeably, it muſt be in Pleaſure, that is renew'd every Day? Or among People that are more voluptuous, or addicted to Pleaſures than they? Shall we aſſert, that 'tis eſſential to a plain and uniform Courſe of Life to be only intermix'd with Pleaſure, and that too with Diſcretion? Muſt we approve of the extraordinary Liberty the Women take in *France*? And ſhall we agree, that the frequent and free Communication between both Sexes, preſerves them from groſs Corruption, into which ſome of thoſe Women fall in other Countries, whom they endeavour to ſhut up? But

to

to decide this Queſtion, we may propoſe another, that is, if the Character of the fair Sex, which in Truth, and according to the Practice of ſo many other Nations, ought to be private and retired, if this Character, I ſay, is not wounded and deſtroy'd by the Way of Living eſtabliſh'd in *France*, and if it be ſo, then I would know which of theſe two Inconveniencies is the greateſt: Not to be able to hinder ſome Women, now and then, from falling into Temptation, out of which they eſcape, or to ſee Women, in general, every Day of their Lives depart from the Character of their Sex, and corrupt their Minds, and yet that nothing that paſſes in this reſpect ſhould be look'd upon as Pranks. 'Tis true, that " *(f)* to the Women of the World, a " Gardener is a Gardener, and a Maſon, a Ma" ſon; but to ſome others that live more retired, " a Maſon is a Man, and a Gardener is a Man; " that every thing is a Temptation to thoſe that " fear it." But I would willingly aſk, if what has cured the Women in *France* of Temptation, is not like that which has made ſome others fall into it, in other Countries; if Women, that ſee Men every Day without any Reſerve, don't after their Way, that is, with Delicacy and Frankneſs, take the ſame Pleaſure which the others do groſly and with Precipitation; if they don't ruin themſelves gingerly and by Degrees, as the others do by Wholeſale, and at once. In a Word, whether a worn out Character of a Woman is not as defective, and as great a blemiſh to the Sex, as a Character that is ſomewhat torn. I would likewiſe know, if the plea-

(*f*) De la Bruyer's *Manners of the Age.*

ſure they take in the Women in *France*, and in the *Beau Monde*, is not ſomething more groſs and vulgar, than what they might expect, in caſe they were allow'd to preſerve Chaſtity, Modeſty and Baſhfulneſs, which without Contradiction, are the Ornaments of their Sex; or, if the Compariſon be not too coarſe, whether it be not Folly in a Man to let others take off the Cream from the Milk he intends to make a Meal on. Let us talk groſly, and acknowledge a Truth which is much to the Advantage of the Nations that obſerve an oppoſite Conduct to the *French:* A Woman that once in her Life has had an unlucky Minute, when ſhe goes aſtray, for which ſhe is afterwards in the greateſt Confuſion; a Woman that takes a Reſolution to live retired, on Account of a wrong Step which the Publick is acquainted with, is leſs corrupted, and a hundred Times leſs a Whore, than a Woman that ſpends her Life in loving, and endeavouring to pleaſe Men, in communicating and receiving the Impreſſions of Love; eſpecially if it be true that Corruption is a Vice of the Heart, and that 'tis there that Shame has its Exiſtence. But ſhall we really believe that the Women in *France* are content with the Pleaſure which they call innocent and delicate, and that the *Beau Monde*, who are every Day ſet agog—— keep within Bounds, and don't ſpoil their Beauty? Do all thoſe Men that are the Favourites of the fair Sex boaſt in vain? Or are they diſcreet without Reaſon? Are all the Adventures we hear of in Publick nothing but made Stories? Do all the fine naked Boſoms, which ſeem to be expoſed on purpoſe to invite the Men to *Materialize* that Love which is ſo delicate and innocent, produce no Effect?

If

If it be ſo, then I much admire their Diſcretion, of which I don't ſee the Cauſe; I admire that the Women in *France* can ſtop in a Way that is ſo ſlippery, that there's nothing to lay hold on, and muſt conſequently be dangerous. Let us talk a little clowniſhly once more, and ſay, that there's, perhaps, a hundred times more Corruption, more Whoring in *France*, among the *Beau Monde*, than in other Countries, where the Women have not the Liberty of ſeeing the Men; and that after all, the great Secret that preſerves People from falling into Temptation, is to fear it, and not to expoſe themſelves to it. Let us be Philoſophers as well as Clowns, and ſay of the *French*, that they have found out the Secret of making Life agreeable: They reſemble a Company of Travellers, that endeavour to make their Journey as eaſy as poſſible, ſometimes getting into a Valley, at other times looking for a Shade of Trees, and repoſing themſelves where-ever they find any cool; but run a riſque in the mean time of looſing their Way, and not coming in time to their Inn. Others that have not this Art, go on openly, and keep the Plain; they ſee before them the Place they are going to, and employ themſelves more about it than about their Fellow-Travellers, and the Pleaſure they might take on the Road; they are fatigu'd, but at laſt come to the Place. In ſhort, the *French* make Life a Sport, or a Walk: Others a Journey, which is a ſerious Affair. Every one of theſe Ways has its Advantages, and its Inconveniencies, according to the Manner of conſidering them; 'tis our Buſineſs not to mix them, and to ſee what is proper for us. Let me make ſome ſmall amends for my ſuper-abundant

dant Philoſophy, and the Ill I have ſaid of the *Beau Monde* of the *French*, by an Encomium that is due to them, a Word on their Men of Merit, which requires a diſtinct Article.

A *Frenchman* of Merit has pretty near the ſame Qualities with Perſons of Merit in other Places; ſince there can be but one Kind of true Merit among Men, and he has over and above all the Agreeableneſs peculiar to the *French*: One is not at the Trouble of gueſſing at him, his Behaviour makes him tranſparent, (if I may uſe that Expreſſion) and ſhews all his Merit, and 'tis in him that the Wiſh of one of the Antients, with regard to Virtue, is accompliſh'd: One may ſee Virtue in him, as it were, with the Eye, and it makes People love him paſſionately. In Effect, we feel ourſelves hurry'd towards a *Frenchman* of Merit; we would be like him, and are griev'd that all are not ſo; we may depend upon him, and believe what he ſays without any Scruple: Probity, Honour and Generoſity appear in him, in ſome Manner, as in their Fountain: 'Tis he that diffuſes it among the *French*, and gives them the vogue in which we ſee them. He poſſeſſes the good Qualities of his Nation, and he happily improves every thing in them, but the Defects which he rectifies: If he ſhines in Converſation, 'tis to ſay things that are obliging, to defend thoſe that are attack'd, or to act in ſuch a Manner that People may be pleaſed with themſelves. He ſucceeds ſo well in this, that every one follows him, well ſatisfy'd with himſelf; this is all they can reproach him with. If he gives any Attention to ſmall Matters, 'tis becauſe he would not neglect any Occaſion of pleaſing; and he does it with ſo good a Grace,

that

that People ſcarce think themſelves obliged to him; it ſeems as if he had nothing elſe in View than to be pleaſed. In a word, and that I may not engage myſelf in too particular an Account, to be an honeſt Man, and to pleaſe is his Profeſſion; he applies himſelf to it, and he excells in it; this is, in my Opinion, the moſt engaging thing among Men: He wants nothing, but to be as valuable to himſelf as he is to others, and 'tis not to be doubted, but ſome of them have that Advantage alſo. But what deſerves to be remark'd above all the reſt, and is much to the Honour of the Nation, that People with ſuch Accompliſhments are not ſo ſcarce as to give an occaſion of crying out when we ſee them; there are ſo many, that every Man who has any Merit, or can diſtinguiſh, may promiſe himſelf to meet ſome of them; but I don't know if ſuch a thing ought to be much wiſh'd for; it may, perhaps, be Matter of Regret for the Remainder of a Man's Life, and may create a Diſlike for the greateſt Part of thoſe he is oblig'd to live with.

I embrace you, *&c.*

LETTER

LETTER III.

AD I entertain'd you with a Deſcription of any diſtant Nation that was little known, I would have the Pleaſure, Sir, of telling you ſome new Things, and giving more Variety to my Letters; but the greateſt ſingularities of the *French*, who are, I believe, the Nation in the World the beſt known, have nothing in them that is ſurprizing. I am come back to them again by a Way which is conſiderable, on account of the Price they ſet upon it, that is, their Behaviour and Turn of Converſation.

The End which moſt of them propoſe by it, is to put themſelves forward, in order to give an advantagious Idea of their Perſons, which ſeems to be their Deſign in ſpeaking. Theſe are the Ways by which they chiefly endeavour to puſh forward, Quality, Riches, Wit, Bravery; and as theſe Things have an Influence in the common Affairs of Life, they have the Satisfaction of coming near them every Minute in Converſation, and pleaſing themſelves with ſome Subject it turns upon, or more properly, they manage things ſo much to the purpoſe, that either directly or indirectly, the Converſation ſhall never turn on any thing elſe; ſo that they are like thoſe rich Men that can travel whole Days on their own Lands. What you

you ſee at a Man's Houſe that entertains you, is always the leaſt, or the worſt; he has a better Suit of Cloaths than that he wears, and more Servants, but they are buſy: He has, likewiſe, more Wit than he ſeems to have, he has made ſome Repartees, that were thought good, and that 'tis good for you to know. You ſhall likewiſe underſtand that he is not over patient, and that he has been ſeen more than once with a drawn Sword; that ſuch a Man, who is a conſiderable Perſon in the World, is his near Relation, and that he dined a few Days before with another, who is a Man of Diſtinction, a Grandee. Theſe ſame Grandees, if any Credit may be given to thoſe that are near them, are mighty full of their Grandeur, and would have others be ſo too; they obſerve a great many Circumſtances, that may be honourable to them, and often harp upon them.— As to the common People, 'tis certain, they have the Faults of the Great, whom they imitate in every thing, and who are more eaſily imitated on the Side that abaſes them, than any other. If the Meanneſs of the one does not hinder them from puſhing themſelves forward; if the Grandeur of the others does not keep them within Boundaries, you may judge of the Character of the groſs of the Nation, and of thoſe that are placed between the Mean People and the Great, to remove, as it were, from the one, and draw near the others. You may likewiſe imagine, how curious the Converſation muſt be in a Company, where every one thinks he deſerves the Attention of the reſt, and labours for it. Among People that have no other View than to impoſe on one another, Strangers, who they think may be more eaſily deceiv'd,

deceiv'd, muſt of courſe be well receiv'd, and 'tis not impoſſible but the good Reception we meet with in *France*, may in ſome meaſure be owing to this. On that ſcore we ought not to examine the Affair any further, but to let them pleaſe themſelves with all their Grandeur. Let us proceed to their Behaviour.

The free and ſprightly Behaviour of the *French* does not ſeem to me in the general, to be ſo very good as ſome imagine, nor ſo very bad as others make it. It gives a Man room in the common Affairs of Life, to get above Conſtraint, and the ſame things don't conſtrain all ſorts of People; ſo that it muſt produce various Effects, according to the Difference of the Perſons that have it. In a Man of Merit, 'tis becoming and agreeable; it ſhews him to the beſt Advantage, and makes him the Delight of all thoſe that converſe with him. In a Man without Merit, or a Blockhead, it turns into Impudence, and makes him a troubleſome Blockhead, that thinks he may do any thing under the Protection of his Behaviour, and is guilty of a great many ridiculous things, in order to ſet it off. The Miſchief of this Partition is, that tho' there's a great Number of Perſons of Merit in *France*, yet you muſt be plagu'd with a great many Blockheads before you meet with one Man of Merit, and that the Agreeableneſs which a frank and eaſy Behaviour adds to him, cannot, by a great deal, make you amends for the other's Impertinence, which is occaſion'd by it. There is another Evil in it likewiſe, that ought to be taken notice of, it makes People ridiculous that don't derive it from Nature, but would aſſume it. Every Nation has ſuch Ways as are proper for them, becauſe they re-

ſult

ſult from the Character of the Mind, and every Nation has a proper Character. The only Way of pleaſing, is to cultivate it, and not to keep too cloſe to theſe Ways, becauſe they follow near enough of themſelves, and are undoubtedly no further good than as they are the Sequel of it. The *French*, that are imitated by ſo many Nations, imitate none; they follow their own Character entirely, and 'tis by that they happen to pleaſe. 'Tis not to be doubted, but if other Nations did the ſame thing, they would pleaſe too; each Nation according to its Way; and 'tis in that reſpect the *French* ought to be imitated. Variety is one of the Beauties of the Univerſe, it extends to Nations and their Ways, as well as to the green Fields; 'tis of the ſame Order with Nature itſelf, that is pleaſed with ſporting and diſplaying her Skill; ſo that we are in the wrong to endeavour to blot it out, for by that Method we run a riſque of ſpoiling a Character that is proper for us, without being able to get a better in its room. On the whole, if they underſtand, by Behaviour, ſome little ſuperficial and ſprightly Ways, which they think to adorn outwardly, they may, perhaps, find themſelves miſtaken; and that the beſt Behaviour is that which is taken no Notice of, as in Scents, 'tis beſt to have none, and 'tis an eſtabliſh'd Rule among People of Taſte to carry no Perfume about them. For tho' the *French* are the People in the World that picque themſelves moſt on having eaſy, as well as genteel Ways; we may, however, obſerve an Affectation among them, which may be reckon'd as one of their Singularities: We ſee a great Number of them do what they call, *giving themſelves Airs*, which is as much as to

ſay,

ſay, that they would let others know by their affected Ways that they value themſelves moſt. One might, I believe, (ſpeaking groſly) call a Perſon that acted ſuch a Part a Fool, or ſay, at leaſt, that he appeared to be ſo by his Behaviour. This Kind of Folly, likewiſe, has its Followers in other Nations.

Politeneſs is a Thing we muſt not ſeparate from their Turn of Converſation and Behaviour. To do nothing that is rude, abuſive, or forbidding is not enough with them; they muſt win People's Eſteem, and ſet themſelves off by Politeneſs; and they are ſo dexterous in it, that you can ſcarce obſerve how 'tis done. 'Tis in this the *Frenchman* triumphs, and in effect, he is really come to ſo much Perfection in it, that even People of Senſe may be pleas'd with the Shew. He is wonderfully intent upon Trifles, and ſubmits with a good Grace to a Thing of no value, which redoubles that of his Politeneſs, and by that Method, extends to all the Actions of Life, as well as to all Sorts of Converſation: His leaſt Actions and his leaſt Motions are adorn'd with it, he ſtretches out his Hand politely, and draws it back politely. He offers it to a Woman going from one Room to another, and runs to do it juſt as if the Paſſage were difficult, or the Track dangerous. He runs in the ſame Manner to take up a Glove, or a Handkerchief fallen to the Ground, with as much Precipitation, as if he were to take them out of the Fire; for there's ſomething more in that, than bare taking up a Glove, or a Handkerchief. At Table, likewiſe, he does ſomething more than to help his Neighbour with clean Hands; he makes Proteſtations that he has not touched what he is going to help him with, and treats him with

with Politeneſs, even at the hazard of paſſing for a Man that is ill. He is not content with telling in a plain and natural Way what he has to ſay, that would not be polite: He tells it by *Honour* and by *Favour*; the moſt indifferent Thing becomes a *Favour* with him: He is ſo polite as not to ſay even an indifferent Thing without firſt ſaying, *Sir, may I be ſo bold?* or, *give me leave, Sir.* He has the *Honour* to ſee what he ſees; the *Honour* to follow what he follows. He has the *Honour* to ſay what he ſays, and he accompanies his *Favours* and *Honours* with great and ſmall *Inclinations* and Reverences which ſuit them. He has *the Honour to be moſt humble Servant, moſt obedient Servant, to be without Reſerve, with much Regard and Eſteem, very particularly, moſt truly, moſt perfectly:* He has *the Honour* to be with an *inviolable Attachment*, with an *entire Devotion*, with *Reſpect*, with a *moſt profound Reſpect*, with *all Sorts of Reſpect, more than he is able to expreſs, and more than any body.* He has a great many more *Honours* I can't remember; every one endeavours to out-do others, and to have a freſh *Honour*, and never was Nation ſo fruitful, ſo rich in Servants, ſo glorious to ſerve. But their Politeneſs is great, in this eſpecially, that they are not content to ſhew it to thoſe above them only; but even to their Equals, theſe Submiſſions they make reciprocally to one another, and moſt commonly they have the *Honour* to be the moſt humble and moſt obedient Servant of thoſe that have the *Honour* to be theirs. This is a Play not much unlike that of the Flies, that paſs their time in going under one another; or, if I muſt ſpeak more Honourably of the *French* Politeneſs, I ſay that all

theſe curious Toys that come to us from *France*, and are admirably well wrought and finiſh'd, all theſe Trinkets in Caſes, all theſe little Moveables with their Springs and Hinges, are a compleat Figure of the pretty People of this Country; of theſe Men that move artificially, and fold and unfold with a good Grace, and on Account of every Thing they have that is poliſh'd and curious, deſerve all the Attention of People of the ſame Taſte, that know how to handle Trinkets: For that is one of the Ingredients in the Character of the *French*; they ought to have Trinkets, they know how to handle them, and it would be in vain for Nature to make for us, that are a clowniſh and unpoliſh'd People, ſuch Sorts of Preſents, as we did not know how to enjoy. This Man that bows down before you every Minute, this Man that is ſo gracious, and has the *Honour* to be your moſt humble Servant, if you don't bow down to him in your Turn, if you don't entertain him with *Honour* and by *your Favour*, will grow ſtiff for you, and all his Brightneſs will tarniſh.

Let us venture to talk groſly of the *French* Politeneſs, or if it be ſo very fine, that groſs Words can't reach it, let us venture, at leaſt, to ſay of it, or of a great Number of Ways which it eſtabliſhes among the People of Air, that 'tis nothing but Apiſhneſs and Littleneſs, and that 'tis an Indignity to them to value themſelves on that Account. But eſpecially Strangers, who aſſume theſe Ways and ſet themſelves off with them, ought to be mark'd for every Thing that is ridiculous in them: But, ſay they, theſe are only bare Civilities, that are allow'd to be done and receiv'd as ſuch, and a Man of Senſe ought not

not to be ſingular, nor thwart Cuſtom. But, without determining whether a Man of Senſe ought to ſubmit to Cuſtom, in Things of this Kind, or not, we need ſay no more than that a great Number of little ridiculous Things, every Minute repeated, amount, at laſt, to a very great Ridicule; that they make thoſe that are noted for them ridiculous, in the ordinary Affairs of Life; that 'tis becoming a Man of Senſe to be exact and plain in his Expreſſions and Behaviour, as well as in his Conduct, and that extraordinary Politeneſs and Behaviour, ſet off to ſo much Advantage, are as improper for a Man as too much Finery. In Truth, we ought to leave both to the Women, and at the ſame Time adviſe ſuch of them as have the moſt Senſe to deſpiſe them: What ſhall we do then with this Politeneſs, and where ſhall we put this Behaviour which People of Faſhion are rather diſguiſed with than adorned? 'Tis agreed that a Suit of Cloaths with too much Lace becomes a Quack Doctor, on the Stage, much better than a well-bred Man in Society. When an out-ſide is all over embroider'd with Politeneſs and fine Ways, ought it not to be ſent back to the Stage, as a proper Ornament for it?

This Affair is too conſiderable, with Regard to thoſe that imitate the *French*, and coſtly too, with Regard to themſelves, not to ſay ſomething more of it. I would willingly aſk theſe Gentlemen, whether true Politeneſs ought not to be uſed at all Times; and if a Man that is thoroughly well-bred does not behave himſelf as ſuch to all his Acquaintance: 'Tis likely that 'tis ſo, ſince Politeneſs is the out-ſide of Civility, which is always the ſame. True Politeneſs ſhould be what we ought not to lay aſide, and conſe-

quently ſhould conſiſt in quite another Thing, than trifling Ways, which People aſſume for thoſe they meet by chance, and lay aſide as ſoon as they part with them. But, perhaps, the *French* may really have this Mark of true Politeneſs, and that in the common Affairs of Life; the Huſband is polite with Regard to his Wife, and the Wife with Regard to her Huſband; the Brother to his Siſter, and ſhe to the Brother; and that the Perſons they meet by chance have no more of it than the Surplus, which they think fit to give them. If it be ſo, we muſt make Satisfaction to the Politeneſs of the *French*, and agree that the other Nations have ſomething groſs and barbarous, in Compariſon of them; but if they were like the reſt of the World in their Family or domeſtick Affairs, the Thing would be otherwiſe, and we would be in the right to improve their Politeneſs againſt them. If Diſſentions, Quarrels and Reproaches were common among them, and that their polite Behaviour was reſerv'd for Neighbours and Strangers, we would have Reaſon to ſay, the People that are leſs poliſh'd, but at the ſame Time have Ways more regular, and almoſt equal for every body, are not ſo clowniſh or ill-bred as the *French*, ſo inconſiſtent with themſelves, and ſo far below what they may be: It would be ſo, at leaſt, for thoſe they live with, and we ſhould have no room to envy them on Account of a Politeneſs which would make us wiſh that it might not be too nearly related to theſe polite People. It would be well for the *French* that ſome Man of Genius would do them as much Service, with Regard to their Behaviour, Politeneſs and Wit, as a Man of Genius did the *Spaniards*, with Regard to their Bravery.

ry. The *Don Quixots* in Wit and Behaviour are as great Fools as the *Don Quixots* in Courage; they are even more numerous, and 'tis certain, that the taking away Men's Taſte for ſuch Trifles as theſe, would be of great Service to them. It would give them an Opportunity of putting themſelves forward by better Ways, and not to think themſelves People of Merit, when they have nothing but Words and Behaviour, an out-ſide trimm'd and borrow'd. I paſs on from the Politeneſs of the *French* to their Gallantry, to that which makes a gallant Man, and out-tops even the polite Man, and in ſome Manner makes him real.

They underſtand by Gallantry the Art of obliging with a good Grace, and embelliſhing the good Offices they do us with all Sorts of little Circumſtances: They underſtand it to admiration, and ſet off the leaſt Services to advantage by their Way of doing them. When you have received any Favours after their Way, tho' they have done ſomething beſides to oblige you, yet you ſtill think there's ſomething wanting, and you can ſcarce avoid bewailing the *French*, at the very time one would think you have the leaſt reaſon to do ſo. The *French* Gallantry is the Effect of their generous Temper, join'd to their Attention to ſmall Matters, wherein they excel; and it ſhews us that this generous Temper is not only excellent in itſelf, but likewiſe able to improve ſome Qualities which are of no value without it; that it gives a Dignity to every thing it extends to. They underſtand by Gallantry in Converſation, a turn of Wit, that draws with dexterity enough from the ſmalleſt Subjects to flatter you. If it be commendable to flatter us,

and make us pleas'd with ourſelves, this Gallantry is, no doubt, a thing that ought to be extoll'd in favour of the *French*, and we muſt like them, and admire them on that Account. But tho' the whole Nation pretends to it, yet this fine Gallantry requires ſomething more than can be found in the Character of a whole Nation, and for a thouſand Perſons that pleaſe that Way, there are ten Thouſand in *France* that diſpleaſe by it, in endeavouring to imitate them: People that tire you with inſipid Praiſes to your Face, and give you a Diſlike to the *French* Gallantry. The Women, above all, are to be complain'd of, eſpecially thoſe of them that have Senſe. Moſt of the Men wou'd think they did not underſtand themſelves ſhou'd they entertain them with any thing plain or natural, or any other thing but themſelves; they think that not to tell a Woman now and then, ſhe is handſome and has Wit, would be to let her underſtand ſhe had neither Beauty nor Wit. But the Women have enough to comfort themſelves with, becauſe the Men do the ſame thing, and entertain one another as the Women do. They uſher Praiſes, or (to make uſe of their own Term) obliging Things into every thing they ſay. This is the Guſt of the Country, and they manage it generally, as they do in ſome Countries, every thing they eat, which tho' always *ſweeten'd with Sugar, is ſtill pleaſing on that Account.* This Singularity in the *French* is, in my Opinion, one of thoſe that deſerves to be dwelt upon a little.

Not only their ordinary Diſcourſes have ſomething of Flattery in them, which is troubleſome to a Man of Modeſty and Senſe, and to every Man

Man that is not cut out for that Kind of Language, and is ignorant of the Way of recoiling Praiſes, or anſwering them in ſuch a Manner as to make them fall on thoſe that give them; but even their premeditated Diſcourſes are generally conſecrated to Praiſe, as a thing the moſt conformable to the Genius of the Nation. 'Tis in this they excel in *France*, and 'tis in it they glory to excel. There's a Body of Men elected from among all the People of Wit, and the moſt famous Writers of the Nation, that even aſſume the Name by Way of Excellence, a Company conſecrated to the Purity of Diſcourſe and Eloquence, which by its Superiority of Wit, preſcribes to others, and directs them. Every one of them, on being receiv'd into this Body, makes a Diſcourſe, as it were, to ſhew a-new, and in Perſon, that he is worthy of the Choice they made of him; and this Diſcourſe, that will ſerve for a Model to others, and ſhews on what Foundation an Orator ought chiefly to exerciſe himſelf, muſt contain Panegyricks; ſome for the Living, and ſome for the Dead. There they praiſe, as it were by Law, Men that have been already prais'd, and muſt be always prais'd a-new for the time to come. They praiſe them juſt as People ſhoot at a Mark, they ſift them with Praiſes. They that praiſe will receive in their turn the Praiſes they gave to others, and theſe learned Men that are placed, as it were, at the Head of the *French* Nation, will, no doubt, continue the Cuſtom of Praiſing, and making——the nobleſt Action of human Underſtanding conſiſt in Praiſe. If the Panegyricks I have ſpoke of are not ſufficient for that End, thoſe they put before their Books, to wit, their Epiſtles Dedicatory, will do it com-

pleatly: There they praiſe with Magnificence, not only a Man of an ordinary Rank, but even an unworthy one, and ſpoil a good Book by a Dedication, which is quite contrary to it. In ſhort, this is the Country where they praiſe at any rate, and where Praiſe by being given to every Body, neither diſtinguiſhes nor properly deſerves the Name. It ſerves to ſhew the Abilities of him that praiſes, if he is ingenious enough to find new Encomiums, or to give a new Turn to thoſe that are worn out. Let us ſpeak plain, and look upon all theſe Praiſes as baſe and unbecoming. To praiſe People to their Faces, whatever they are, is to ſuppoſe they love Praiſes, which is an Affront. To praiſe Men before all the World, that are known to deſerve it, is Impudence. To praiſe the Great, who deſire it, without doing any Thing to deſerve it, is Baſeneſs. On the whole, to make a Trade of Praiſing, tho' it were virtuous People, is a pitiful Trade; it hurts the Virtue which they praiſe. Virtue diſtinguiſhes Men; but Praiſe made ſo general as it is, jumbles the Virtuous with the reſt, and renders their Example of no Effect. Beſides, Men, in their utmoſt perfection, are but ſtill weak, ſubject to Error and human Calamity, and very imperfect.

There's no Proportion between them and magnificent Panegyricks, which are as little ſuitable to them as Gigantick Statues are to Men, who, tho' never ſo tall, are but ſtill ſhort in compariſon. 'Tis ſurprizing, that People of good Underſtanding and Merit, are not ſenſible of this Truth; that they ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be drawn away by Cuſtom to act the Panegyriſt, which is but a mean Character without ſome diſcretion

eretion, which is not much obſerv'd in this Way of praiſing; it puts the honeſt Man on a level with the Flatterer, and, perhaps, with the Forger too, when they praiſe the Living. The extravagant Politeneſs of the *French*, and their falſe Taſte of Wit, have introduced this unworthy Way of Praiſing and Slander, which is as common in *France* as the other, and, which they ſet off handſomely, proves that there's ſomething of the extream in the Character of this Nation, and of Ridicule in its Politeneſs. Let us conſider the *French* by ſome other Ways, and let us give them the Encomiums that are proper for them.

There's one Thing, tho' not very conſiderable, yet deſerves to be extoll'd in their Favour, they are the People in the World that behave themſelves beſt at an Entertainment, and the moſt agreeable at Drinking-bouts. One wou'd think it was for them that Wine was made; it makes them ſprightly and witty, and 'tis then the *French* Wit ſhews itſelf in an agreeable Manner, and receives new Strength. They have a thouſand little Songs to excite Pleaſure, and make us renounce Care and enjoy Life, and their Moral diſplay'd after that Manner, has its effect: We ſee how ridiculous our Cares make us, we would live happily for the preſent, and we want but little to enable us to do ſo. Of all Kinds of Drunkenneſs this is, no doubt, the beſt; and few People, any where elſe, can boaſt of having Morals that ſtick ſo cloſe to them on Occaſion, and ſtand Proof better. For, as the Drinking-Songs, or perhaps Songs in general, are ſung more in *France* than in any other Parts; ſo 'tis reckon'd among thoſe Things wherein the *French* excel, and have a Talent which they have not elſewhere. We muſt

ſay,

ſay, beſides, to their Praiſe, that in lieu of the great Entertainments in other Countries, the formidable Banquets where Crowds of People get together very ill match'd, and a Profuſeneſs of Meats ill dreſs'd, the *French* make their Meals with few People, and few Diſhes, and in ſuch a Manner, that Openneſs of Heart, and an entire Freedom of Speaking what we think, are their chief Pleaſure. But above all, their familiar Way of joining thoſe that come in by Chance with the People of the Houſe, and eating together any Thing that is ready, is ſomething cordial, and more ſociable, than Eating and Drinking: This is one of the Circumſtances in their Art of Living, which is worthy of Imitation. There's one Thing more to add to their Pleaſures; theſe People that take them ſo often, and ſeem to be cut out for nothing elſe, do it after ſuch a Manner, that the Buſineſs they are intruſted with never ſuffers on that Account. In other Parts, Debauchery beſots People, and thoſe that addict themſelves to it are fit for nothing: But here 'tis not ſo, a Deboſhee may be a Man of Parts, that not only makes uſe of all Opportunities of gaining his Ends, but even makes his Debauchery ſerve for that Purpoſe. It ſeems as if it belong'd only to the *French* to extend the Pleaſures of the Table as far as they have done it, and to make that a Subject of Panegyrick which is a Reproach to others, and I am for leaving them the Property of a Thing, which they alone know how to uſe.

There's another Abuſe which the *French* have happily rectify'd, *viz.* Gaming, 'tis very much the Taſte of the Nation, and, perhaps, none has more Gameſters in it. But they obſerv'd that playing for great Sums of Money is a pernicious Thing

Thing that ruins and makes People mad, and is only proper for ſome particular People; and they have generally agreed upon a Game for Company ſake, which is a ſmall Game, that muſt neither be ruinous nor troubleſome, and where they have an Opportunity of diſplaying their Politeneſs and their Wit, which muſt render it ſtill more agreeable. High Play is ſerious, and has ſomething of Tragedy in it; this is no ways proper in Societies form'd for Mirth. Small Play, or Play for Company ſake, has more of Comedy; there the Actors play their Parts with a good Grace, and ſay a great many pretty Things that have relation to the Game, and make it more pleaſing. It has likewiſe an Audience to Honour it, and clap Hands. Theſe are the little Family Comedies which are now acted in *France*, in all the Houſes where the *Beau Monde* comes; every one of them has every Day the Pleaſure to chooſe, either to be one of the Actors, or to have the Satisfaction of the Shew; but 'tis better to act, and here the Dignity is on the Side of the Actors. Don't you think, Sir, that all this is well contriv'd, and that half of a Life that is ſpent in Playing, and ſeeing others Play, is paſſed innocently? In reality, to looſe Time is not the greateſt Abuſe that may be made of it, and by Means of Gaming, we ſhun Idleneſs, which is the Mother of all Vices. But, you will ſay, this does not do any Honour to a witty Nation, and we ſee, in other Places, People that don't ſet up for Wit, entertain themſelves with what the Heart affords them, and paſs away whole Hours without Gaming, and without being tired. 'Tis true, but beſides that that leans too much to Serioufneſs, and can only be proper for a few People

of

of a particular Character; 'tis becauſe they have not the Pleaſure of beginning again the Day following, and making their Commerce the ordinary Courſe of Life. That is the great Advantage they have here by Play, it allows Men to meet Perſonally, and puts them all in a ſtate of profiting by one another. That is the Way by which the *French* may chiefly boaſt of being of all Men the moſt ſociable.

Of all their Singularities the Faſhion is the greateſt, and contains the greateſt Number of Singularities; tis it that diſtinguiſhes them from the reſt of the World. The Faſhion is Cuſtom in all its Rage, which ſeems to play upon them, and to make an Eſſay and Shew of all its Power. In truth, all People ſubmit to Cuſtom, and that is, no doubt, their Unhappineſs. By this Dependance, wherein it ſuffices to do as others do, we diſpenſe with examining what we do, and even the politeſt People that cou'd ſet others right, ſuffer themſelves to be hurry'd away, and are afraid, in caſe they ſhould do better, of being thought ſingular or affected. But Cuſtom among all People is ſomewhat regular, and every one does all it requires of it. 'Tis not ſo in *France* where it has nothing fixed or ſettled; it is a Torrent that changes its Current every time it overflows, and in ſo doing puts all the Country under Water. From one Cuſtom that has glutted them they go on to another; 'tis always to a freſh and vigorous Cuſtom they ſubmit, and Men, in all theſe Changes, find themſelves buſy'd without any Ceſſation, to ſubmit always a-new. This Exerciſe, in which they take a Pleaſure, is Liberty to them, in which they are like Priſoners that have their Irons chang'd every Day, and on that Account, might think themſelves at large,

large. From whence comes this Singularity, will you ſay? Why, does Cuſtom alter more in *France*, and is its Power greater than elſewhere? 'Tis becauſe the *French* Nation is more ſubject to Change than all others, and is pleaſed with Novelty, and with a Kind of Uniformity at the ſame Time: Every one will be like others; and, perhaps, no Nation can renounce with more Eaſe any particular Liberty which others preſerve. All this together ſubjects the *French* to the Faſhion, that unites them in Novelty, and gratifies their changeable Humour, and they fall to it again inſenſibly in every Thing. All acknowledge its Authority, the Great, and even the King as well as others: The Faſhion reſembles Deſtiny, which the Poets ſpeak of, and is ſuperiour to all the Deities, and which *Jupiter* himſelf obeys. To enter into the Particulars of every Thing to which it binds the *French*, would be to begin again; for all that is done in *France*, and which I have mention'd to you in my Letters, all I can ſay more to you of it, is done by the good Pleaſure of the Faſhion, and the Matter is ſo copious, that I can ſcarce determine what Part to take firſt. Let us begin with their Cloaths, which is an Affair of great Moment with them.

A Stranger that ſtays in *France*, is ſurprized at the continual Changes cauſed by the Faſhion in Apparel: He thinks he ſees People that try all Sorts, without finding one to fit them, but in the End there's not one but does fit them. Every time they get a new Faſhion they affirm very ſeriouſly, and prove by good Reaſons, that 'tis more becoming, or more convenient than that they left off, and a Man would almoſt believe there's ſome Truth in it. But, however, at the End of a hundred Changes, all

from

from good to better, they return to the old Fashions; that is, after a great deal of Motion, they find themselves in the Place from whence they set out. If any thing can stop them, 'tis the Changes of their Neighbours that imitate them; considering to what extreams they carry the Fashions, and what Pleasure they take in over-doing the new Things that come to them from *France*, it would seem as if their Design was to ridicule the *French* rather than imitate them. But that is not the cause, the *French* have Reason for all their Changes; they fit themselves with every Thing that is proper for them, and every Nation that would imitate them, becomes itself ridiculous. They seem, as it were, to be made for their Cloaths, and always for the last Suit they put on; and on the other Hand, we Foreigners, with every new Fashion, look as if we picked up some new Ridicule. What is surprizing in this, is that so many People shou'd assume it, and be sollicitous in turning it off from the *French* and laying it on their own Shoulders: And they carry this so far, that those among the *French* that take upon them to justify their Nation on the score of the Fashion, alledge the Profit they make of it, by selling their Baubles at a dear Rate to the rest of the World: And it must be allow'd to be a good Reason, and that after all we ought rather to laugh at ourselves than the *French*, as 'tis usual to ridicule the Bubbles and not the Quack, when he sells his Pills at a good Price, and grows rich by his Drolling.

The Changes of the Fashion are as frequent in other Things as in Cloaths; but they are more troublesome when they turn on Things that are difficult to Change. Such a Man was undone

done by renewing his Furniture, which are yet new, but not of the new Faſhion; another by getting his Diſhes and Plates new made, tho' very well made already, but out of Faſhion. This Man is diſpleas'd with his Houſe before 'tis finiſh'd, becauſe another Way of Building is come into Vogue in the mean time. That Man has diſcharg'd all his Domeſticks, tho' they did their Duty very well, but they are not in the Faſhion; for it ſeems Domeſticks likewiſe are regulated by it, even among the Women, with whom one would think nothing ſhould be chang'd in this reſpect. The Faſhion allows them to be ſerv'd by Men, and by that gives them the Pleaſure of changing. Sometimes they muſt have little Lackies, ſometimes tall; at another time Pages, and ſome are for Blacks. At preſent, I underſtand they are for Mutes, and I can eaſily believe it, when I thing of another ſort of Domeſticks which, no doubt, the *French* Politeneſs will not allow them to bring into their Houſes, Mutes muſt be very proper for them, if we conſider the Courſe which Things may take. The Changes of the Faſhion don't ſtop at the Domeſticks; People of all Conditions riſe and fall with its Flux and Reflux, and a Man's Merit that is not overcaſt by it, muſt be eminent indeed. On the other Hand, there's no Character or Talent ſo abject or mean, provided it has ſomething of Shew, but a Man may hope to ſee in Faſhion ſometime or another. Even Wit itſelf, the darling Idol of the People, depends on this other Idol which is much greater. Sometimes we have ſeen Points of Wit in Faſhion, ſometimes the *double entendre*; there was a Time when they ſpoke nothing but *Proverbs*; another time nothing but *Riddles*. Affected Words

Words and Bombaſt have had their Turns, and perhaps after the brillant and the elegant Stile now in vogue, the Mode will bring the *French* to the Plain and the Rational, where ſome of them that had the Courage to go firſt, are already come.

Their Language alſo depends on the Faſhion and reſents its Caprices, and all the People of Wit that have enter'd into a League to defend it, can't put it out of Danger. The new Expreſſions introduced by the Faſhion, are not only inſufficient to make amends for thoſe it retrenches, but the Alterations it cauſes in lieu of making the Language more perfect, generally make it more whimſical, and that to ſuch a degree, that the *French* themſelves can't always decide ſome Caſes that happen. That is the Reaſon that their beſt Authors go out of Faſhion, one after another, that is, they become ridiculous to moſt Readers. For the delicate Ear of a *Frenchman* is offended at a Word grown old, that alone is ſufficient to give him a diſlike of the whole Page, and to ſome Readers of a more refin'd Taſte, a diſlike of the whole Book, which one of their own Authors aſſures us he has ſeen, and takes occaſion from thence to recommend Purity of Stile to Writers that wou'd have their Works read. But now the Faſhion has eſtabliſhed ſomething very Polite for Writers, which I muſt remark by the way, they don't put their proper Names at the head of their Works; 'tis no more the *Johns* and the *Peters* that write; that would be too natural, and too much like the Days of *Tore*. The Authors of new Books are always, or at leaſt very often, *Meſſieurs*, they take Care to advertiſe us of it at the Head of the Work, and their Works, that, in truth, have

have more of this Title of *Monſieur* in't, than of the *Man*, more of Turn and Expreſſions, than of Sentiments and Reality, are very ſuitable to the Title, and make it good. I am of Opinion the *French* owe this Politeneſs to an Exceſs of the Faſhion, with regard to the Title of *Monſieur*, which it has diſpers'd every where. People repeat it every Minute when they ſpeak to one another, and they give it ſo often, that at laſt they give it to themſelves; This way is only uſed in Books, and the Faſhion has not yet introduced it into Converſation; but in my Opinion we are not far from it, for when the Wife ſpeaks to her Huſband, or of him, ſhe calls him by no other Name than *Monſieur*, *Monſieur* ſuch a one. *Monſieur*, on the other hand, calls his Wife by no other Name than *Madam*, and when he ſpeaks of her, 'tis always *Madam* ſuch a one. There's but one Step more wanting to make People give theſe Titles to themſelves, and to turn into *Monſieur* and *Madam* theſe pitiful Monoſyllables, *Me* and *I*, which are ſo often repeated in Converſation, and being unworthy to deſcribe Perſons of Quality, muſt be left with the People they are ſuitable to. That would, no doubt, be polite in the higheſt Degree, and I long to ſee it eſtabliſh'd.

In ſhort, the Faſhion rules equally the moſt important Things, and the moſt trifling. It governs the Men themſelves, and regulates their Conduct and Courſe of Life, as well as the Outſide and Behaviour; 'tis it that orders a Man to be an Atheiſt or a Devotee, Knowing or Ignorant, fond of Wine or Women, his own Wife or another Man's. Or rather, the Faſhion in *France*, at this Time, prohibits a Man from

minding his Wife, or in walking, or on other Occaſions, to hand her; that would be too much like a Citizen, and the old Times. Every married Man of the *Beau Monde* muſt let another take care of his Wife, and tell her ſhe is handſome, as he on the other hand muſt do by another's Wife, and talk to her of her Charms; and Charms likewiſe depend on the Faſhion; they are ſometimes in dark Eyes, ſometimes in blue. We have ſometimes ſeen your hawk'd Noſes in Vogue, at other times Noſes ſomething turn'd up, or flat, make a good Figure, and carry away the Bell from the hawk'd. The Faſhion does not ſtop here, ſhe diſcovers other Charms. At preſent ſhe is in Boſoms which ſhe has drawn out of Obſcurity, and ſet off to Advantage, as one of the Ornaments of the fair Sex, and ſhe ſeems to be fix'd there. It may likewiſe happen, that while ſhe is at reſt, ſhe is meditating on ſome great Deſign: As ſhe triumphs over Men in puſhing them to diſplay all their Bravery, even ſo far as to kill one another on Purpoſe, ſhe may happen to compleat her Triumphs over the Women, by inducing them to diſplay all their Charms. In this Caſe the Women of the neighbouring Countries, who are ready to obey every Motion of the Faſhion, and always diſpos'd to excel the Women in *France*, will be obliged to content themſelves with following, without having the Pleaſure of out-doing them. Let us come to ſome other Regulations of the Faſhion.

They extend very far, as I have told you already, even to Looks and Poſtures. There's a Way of lying or ſitting upright in a Coach, upright or leaning in an Elbow Chair. Formerly the *French* wore their Hats on their Heads, and

and then there was a Way of taking them off; at preſent they don't put them on at all, for fear of diſordering their Wigs, which the Faſhion would have them reſpect above any thing elſe. For the Peruke is properly the Head-dreſs of the *French*, and a happy Amendment of a Man's Head of Hair, which Nature has made to mean for him by one half. There's a Way of eating according to the Faſhion, a Way of helping one's ſelf at Table, and helping others, which muſt be done artificially and with little Ceremonies that denote Politeneſs. Above all, one muſt be very attentive on ſuch Things as others may have Occaſion for, prevent them, and not to let them be reduced to the grievous Neceſſity of helping themſelves; but in that, as well as in other Things, the Faſhion is not confined to Behaviour; ſhe proceeds to what is eſſential, and 'tis by her Deciſions that any Kind of Meat is wholeſome or hurtful, inſipid or delightful, that it muſt be dreſs'd after this or that Manner, ſerv'd up at the Beginning or End of a Meal. According to her Orders eating is follow'd by gaming, of which I have ſpoke to you already, for 'tis ſtill the Faſhion that diſpoſes of Time, and the Manner of paſſing it away, and ſhe could ſcarce eſtabliſh any that is more generally liked, and where the Dependance is more voluntary. She regulates the Kind of Play that is proper, and alters it from Time to Time, which revives, by the Novelty, thoſe that grow tired, and engages ſuch as have not begun to play.

And does not Converſation (will you ſay) depend in *France* on the Faſhion, as well with Regard to the Subject, as the Kind of Wit? And don't People entertain one another with certain

Matters regulated by the Faſhion, rather than others? No, Sir, 'tis here the *Frenchman* preſerves his Liberty. He diſcourſes concerning himſelf, and every Thing that comes into his Mind as much as he thinks fit, and I am of Opinion, nothing can put him under any Conſtraint in this Reſpect. But that the Faſhion might not loſe her Right to a Thing that is important to the preſent State of Converſation, the *French*, of their own good Will, make it turn, moſt commonly, on the Faſhion, and ſpeak of it with all the Application that ſo great a Subject deſerves. Or rather, they reſpect the Faſhion to ſuch a Degree, as to ſpeak nothing of her directly, or her Origine and Dignity; but they entertain themſelves with her Ordinances, which they call *Modes*. They approve and vindicate them againſt any one that finds fault; they examine and weigh with Maturity every Thing that is equivocal or uncertain, in this Reſpect. The Queſtion about Preference, between the Ancients and the Moderns, on which they run Parallels, and which is the great Queſtion that employs the Wits of *France*, is not more debated among them, than daily Queſtions about the ancient and modern Faſhions; they make Parallels between them, and obſerve how far the laſt Faſhion has the Advantage of that which went before it; how much more becoming are the preſent Faſhions than thoſe in former Days. They reaſon on the turn of a Sleeve, the Genteelneſs of the Facings, on the Number of Buttons, and ſuch other like Things, which they regulate and ſet a Price upon with a great deal of Exactneſs. A Man is ſaid to have a Taſte, when he applies himſelf, and is well ſkill'd in all theſe Things; there's Emulation and Glory to excel in them.

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To be ignorant of them, or neglect them, ſavours of the old Times, or, as they ſay, of the other World, which they think different enough from this below, to make them ſuppoſe that there's no room in it for all theſe Things.

In a Word, the Faſhion leads and drives all in *France*, and the *French* ſubmit to her in every Thing with a perfect Reſignation. Oh what a curious Hiſtory would that of the Faſhion be, if we had one, and how much does this Deity deſerve a Temple in a Country where ſhe is ſo religiouſly ador'd! unleſs they would have *Paris* be her Temple, where ſhe gives Laws, and where all meet to proſtrate themſelves before her and make her Offerings. The *French* reſort to *Paris* to improve themſelves, and thoſe that have never been there are no more than Country *Bumpkins*, which are deſpiſed. Strangers likewiſe run thither from all Sides to be poliſh'd, to take for a Title of Merit, an Outſide, and Dreſs, (which among them are Things capable of deceiving) the Honour whereof recoils on the *French*. By this Behaviour and Apparel, the *French* are not far from univerſal Monarchy, ſeeing all ſubmit to them, but the invincible *Spaniard*;

Cuncta Terrarum Subacta,
Præter atrocem Animum Catonis.

which muſt give them pretty near as much Satisfaction, as if Men had ſubmitted to them in another Senſe, for Behaviour and Apparel are of great Moment with them, and they would think themſelves in a State of Dependance, ſhould they be obliged to follow others in Things of this Kind. What is ſurprizing in this, is that even the People who ſeem to hate and deſpiſe the *French*, ſubmit to them, and acknowledge their

Superiority in this Reſpect. 'Tis a Miracle which can't be eaſily accounted for; to hate a Notion with ſuch Ways and Apparel, and yet not to hate the Ways and Apparel, is as extraordinary, in my Opinion, as what they tell us of *Lightning*, that it melts Gold in a Purſe without burning it.

Let us do Juſtice to the Faſhion, as well with Regard to the Good as the Ill ſhe does the *French*. The general and material Ill is, that ſhe is as fond of Novelty as of Trifles, and that this Novelty is not accompany'd with any Profit or Advantage as it ought to be. She troubles and ruins a great Number of People, makes all Diſtinction odious, and puts all thoſe that would get rid of her on a level with the Vulgar. And I don't know whether ſhe is not an Obſtacle to good Senſe and the Liberty of the Mind; this is, however, true that the more prevalent Cuſtom is in any Country, the Underſtanding of the Inhabitants is ſo much the narrower, and remote from Reaſon; and, therefore, the Faſhion muſt conſequently be very injurious to the *French*. The Good ſhe does them in exchange is, that ſhe eſtabliſhes from Time to Time ſome uſeful Ways, ſuch as the common People would not receive, perhaps, ſhould they come from any Authority leſs venerable. By all the Changes ſhe introduces one after another, even thoſe that ruin ſome, ſhe does good to others, to Workmen and Merchants, that grow rich by them, and to a great many others that get their Subſiſtence under them. Beſides, the Faſhion affords Matter for Converſation to an infinite Number of People of Wit, that would find themſelves embarraſs'd without her, and would ſcarce be able to ſupport their Reputation. There are ſome People

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that will not allow of the Art of Printing, becauſe a great Number of People get their Bread by copying Books. All thoſe People, ſay they, would be reduced to Beggary, and there would be Reaſon to fear moſt of them would become High-way-men. One might alledge the ſame Reaſon againſt any that would introduce a fix'd or ſettled Apparel and Behaviour, and aboliſh the Faſhions: All the fine People that make it the ordinary Subject of Converſation, would not have any thing to talk of, and conſequently would fall upon their Neighbours. In a Word, the Faſhion diverts the reſtleſs and changeable Temper of the Nation from Things that are important, where it might have ill Conſequences, and inclines it towards ſuch as are leſs conſiderable, wherein the continual Changes have their proper Uſe on Account of their Novelty. By this Method Trifles become valuable and important in their Turn; and the Character of the *French*, as far as it runs upon Trifles, is in ſome Meaſure ſet off by them. After all, muſt the Faſhion be an Advantage to the Nation, notwithſtanding all her Meanneſs and Singularity? In that Caſe ſhe will overflow in *France* like the *Nile* in *Ægypt*, whoſe Slime ſpreads every where, and is a Benefit of Nature for the whole Country.

Adieu, SIR, *&c.*

LETTER IV.

Believe, Sir, I have ſtill Matter enough for another Letter concerning the *French*, tho' I may, perhaps, trouble you with ſome Repetitions.

The People in *France* appear to me to be gentle and complaiſant; in other Reſpects, their Character is not uniform, but varies according to the different Provinces. For Example, they pretend the *Normans* are cunning, the *Gaſcons* witty and brave, but much given to Boaſting, and ſo inclinable to ſet themſelves forward, and to Vanity in every thing, that they are partly the ſubject of the Fables or idle Stories made in *France*. It may, however, be true that their Character is the *French* Character over-done, and that while a great many People laugh at the *Gaſcons*, they laugh at themſelves at the ſame Time, without being ſenſible of it. Thoſe of *Limoſin* are reputed to be clowniſh, that is, not ſo polite as the reſt of the *French*; for you muſt know this Country can't produce any thing that is clowniſh; that is its Prerogative, as every Country has its own; for Example, they ſay, there are no venemous Things in *Ireland*, nor Wolves in *England*. The Inhabitants of *Paris*, who muſt be conſider'd as a diſtinct People, are reckon'd ſilly, that fool away their Time with gazing at every Thing. They are good natur'd and civil, and very mindful

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of good Offices. A Tradeſman of whom you aſk the Way, will leave his Shop to ſhew it to you, and if you call him *Monſieur*, when you thank him, he will think himſelf very well paid for his Trouble. Thro' all *France* the People are leſs inſolent, and more tractable than in other Countries; this Conformity is a conſequence of the Nation's Character. They ſubmit to Authority, be it never ſo ſevere; they admire with Humility every Thing that has an Air of Grandeur, and rejoice as conſtantly as the Nobility themſelves, at all the Chimeras the Court would have them feed themſelves with.

The *French* Peaſants ſeem to be miſerable in every Reſpect; they are ill lodged, ill cloathed, ill fed, and have only from Hand to Mouth. And they are yet more unhappy than they appear to be; they are cut out for this Kind of Life, and the greateſt Miſery can neither humble them entirely, nor make them revolt; We don't hear any talk in this Country of People that are puſh'd by Deſpair to violent Reſolutions, neither againſt themſelves or the Government. 'Tis very extraordinary that the Peaſants ſhould be pleaſed with the Grandeur of the Prince under which they ſeem to groan; one would think their black Bread had a better Reliſh every Time they heard of gaining a Battle, or taking a Town.

The Handicrafts-men are ſkillful and very induſtrious, and they can't be otherwiſe in this Country, where the Faſhion changes continually, and nothing pleaſes, or is ſold, but what is well made; for 'tis difficult to pleaſe the *Frenchman* in Trifles, he ſifts them narrowly, reaſons and refines upon them. He ſtops and amuſes himſelf with Pleaſure at a Workman's Shop; his Money

Money gives him ſome Authority over him, and it ſeems as if he took Pleaſure in prolonging the Time, in order to make it hold out. Beſides, not being over-rich, nothing but the Beauty of the Work can oblige him to buy it at a dear Rate. 'Tis likely the Workmen in *France* are ſomewhat indebted to the Women, they have ſome Taſte, and beſides that Trifles are properly in their Province, 'tis laid down here as an eſtabliſh'd Rule that they preſide over all Sorts of Work.

The Merchants are extreamly civil, forward and indefatigable in ſhewing you every Thing you aſk for, and even more than you aſk for; you would ſay, that as they are *Frenchmen*, they take a Pleaſure in ſetting Things off to Advantage, you ſee them always pleas'd, always civil, tho' you have given them Trouble without buying any Thing; but to be even with you they aſk extravagant Prices for their Goods, eſpecially ſuch as People covet moſt in this Place; Civility and Novelty which they are continually inventing. And they make us Strangers pay more than the *French*; they ſuppoſe he that has not ſome particular Ways, or that has the Air of a Foreigner, is chalk'd out to be their Bubble. Thus when a *Frenchman* finds they aſk an exceſſive price for any Thing, the ordinary Phraſe he makes uſe of to expreſs his Reſentment is, *I believe you take me for a Foreigner*; and the Fact is really ſo: 'Tis not eaſy to imagine how far their Aſſurance goes, and how much we are perplex'd when theſe People, with their extraordinary Politeneſs, endeavour to make us pay three Times more than Things are worth, and put us under a Neceſſity of ſuffering them to rob us, or otherwiſe letting them underſtand

derſtand that we look upon them as Robbers. I muſt, in particular, ſay ſomething of the Bookſellers, ſince their Way of dealing with us ſhews the Idea they have of us as to Books, and that it muſt be ſuch an Idea as Strangers give them.

Theſe Gentlemen offer ſuch of us as make the beſt Figure, and whom they would ſeem to reſpect in a particular Manner, the *Mercure Galant*, the Works of *M. le Pais*, ſome Novels in Faſhion, ſome new Comedies; and if new Books are not found acceptable, they conclude with ſhewing us the Book call'd the *Courtier*, as being the beſt of all, and never refus'd by a Stranger. I ſay they offer theſe Books to the moſt eminent among us; for they don't obſerve ſo much Ceremony to ſuch of us as make no great Figure, or that wear plain Cloaths. When *M*—— and I were at the *(b)* Palais, which is the principal Place for Books, we aſk'd the Bookſeller for two or three, which he could not find, his Wife, who happen'd to be preſent, did not give us Time to aſk for any others; being enraged at our Preſumption, ſhe ſpoke aloud to her Huſband, (who excuſed himſelf civilly for his not having the Books we wanted) *Don't you ſee theſe are Foreigners, that don't know what they ask for? Give them* Chiffler's *Grammar, 'tis that they muſt have.* 'Tis very true, I have formerly been thought worthy of the *fine Diſcourſes of Mademoiſelle de Sucderi*, that an honeſt Bookſeller would have forced me to buy. But what Quantities of theſe faſhionable Books, of theſe wretched Productions, are to be ſeen in that Place? Enough to infect all *Europe*, and to make us look upon it as the Sink of *Parnaſſus*; or, if we muſt have a more polite Compa-

(b) This is a Place where Books and other Things are Sold.

Compariſon, I ſay, when I ſee ſo many of theſe Book ranged, as it were, in Order of Battle, and ready to invade the neighbouring People, they put me in mind of the formidable Armies that ravaged *Europe* formerly, and after deſtroying its fineſt Ornaments filled it with *Gothick* Inventions. Romances make more Havock than any thing elſe, and 'tis with Reſpect to them that the *French* reſemble Conquerors, that are not ſatisfy'd with carrying off the Riches which they get by Plunder, but ſend their Troops to burn the neighbouring Countries, and make them all tributary. This Buſineſs is rather melancholy than diverting, and requires our Attention. If it be true that Compoſitions of Wit, which are no Way inſtructive, and ſerve for no other End than to amuſe the Reader, ſpoil the Taſte, which is allow'd by People of Senſe, what ſhall we do with the Crowd of bad Writers? They that are not content to put off their Trifles, but poiſon People by their Writings, teach Evil, and corrupt the Heart as well as the Underſtanding. The *Athenians* made *Socrates* drink Hemlock Juice for corrupting Youth; and if they are blam'd, 'tis not for puniſhing ſuch a Crime after that Manner, but for puniſhing an innocent Man. What Puniſhment does not theſe Writers of Romances and Novels deſerve, that diſorder the Imagination, and poiſon the Hearts of thouſands of the young People? They certainly deſerve the Hemlock which *Socrates* did not; but the ſame Humour that got *Socrates* accuſed and condemn'd, ſecures them.

There's ſomething very ſingular in *French* Books, which I muſt obſerve by the by, there are not only an infinite Number of Romances, Novels, and other Books on Love, but likewiſe

wiſe a great many Poems on the ſame Subject; and their Tragedies and Comedies too, and even their good Books, their Books of Reflections paint Love after a Manner that does it no Diſcredit; they make it one of thoſe Qualities or Circumſtances that are common to Man, and for which he has no Reaſon to conceal himſelf, or be under any Diſorder. The Reaſon of this is in all Probability, that in their Societies, which are compos'd of Men and Women, they make Love familiar, and indulge it even beyond what might be expected in Youth, or, we may ſay, that Love carries Youth beyond their Years. This is the Reaſon that Lovers in this Country don't appear ſo ridiculous as in other Parts; but, on the other hand, Love gives the Nation in general, or at leaſt ſuch of them as are its Ornament, a Ridicule not to be found elſewhere. The Opera, above all, as 'tis compoſed and repreſented in *France*, is one of the Sources where the Nation, or at leaſt the *Beau Monde* that has an Influence over it all, takes their Character. Love is there repreſented as a Thing that forms the Happineſs of Youth, and is ſet off with every Thing that can give it an Air of Innocence, and make it agreeable to the Audience. The Dances contribute to it, and the ſoft Muſick renders the Amuſement very moving, and carries Love to the Bottom of the Heart. The Mothers bring their Daughters to theſe Shews, and there the Huſbands meet their Wives; and after they have ſeen them a hundred and a hundred Times, they can't be perſuaded their Minds are any Way more corrupted than before, or more than People that never were at an Opera, which is a Proof that this Kind of Corruption is come to ſuch a Degree

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in *France*, that nothing can be added to it. Tho' that is the Spring of groſs Corruption, 'tis ſtill nothing with them; and even this is look'd upon to be no more than a Trifle. They know how to extenuate and render it leſs odious by the genteel Names which their Politeneſs gives it, calling debauched Men *the Women's Favourites*, and the debauched Women, *Women of Gallantry*.

There's a Rank of Men in *France* that ought not to have any room in theſe Papers, but their Manners intitle them to it, which are entirely oppoſite to their Names; theſe are your Abbots that have no Abbeys: They are a genteel People that pique themſelves on their Politeneſs and Wit, and live only for Pleaſure; 'tis among them in particular we meet with pretty Airs and modiſh Behaviour, Phraſes, new Songs and Verſes, and all the reſt of thoſe extraordinary Things in which *France* takes ſo much Pride. But theſe Abbots are not all without Abbeys, as you might imagine from what I have now told you, and that it was this Courſe of Life that excluded them. Theſe Gentlemen are even truſted with Biſhopricks, when Fortune will have it ſo. I believe, when a Stranger underſtands, the People of the World are afraid of theſe Abbots in their polite Societies, he thinks immediately that the Preſence of ſuch religious People makes the others aſham'd, and keeps them within the Bounds of Reſpect, but never conſiders that they are fear'd becauſe they are formidable Rivals, that often carry the Prize from their Competitors.

There's another very ſingular Set of People among the *French*, call'd Rakes of Quality, which muſt not be paſſed by in Silence. They are

are young Men that repreſent in Epitome every Thing that is bad and impertinent among Youth, or in the *French* Character, and at Court. In order to put themſelves forward, and above other Men, they put themſelves above the Decorum obſerv'd by the reſt of the World, and diſcover their Aſſurance and Scorn on all Occaſions. They affect to have even ſome Vices which they are free from, rather than ſhew their good Qualities which they may be endued with, and I don't think Virtue had ever more faithful Admirers that carry'd her to a higher Point, than ſome of theſe Rakes have carry'd Vice, to which they devote themſelves, and in which they glory. If Heroes of this Kind form themſelves, out of a Collection of the worſt Things in the *French* Nation, they take care to pay the Nation what they borrow'd with Intereſt; 'tis partly by copying theſe Rakes that the People who don't ſee the Court, imitate it, and that the Court Air is ſpread over all the Kingdom. Strangers begin to follow the *French* in this as well as in other Things, and to make themſelves as ridiculous as poſſible, by affecting what is in itſelf bad and ridiculous, and is no Way ſuitable to any but ſuch as are cut out for Extravagance, and equip themſelves with it as if it were an Ornament. Theſe Rakes are, in their Kind, and in the Opinion of the Men, exactly what a Woman with a broken Reputation is among her own Sex, and it was neceſſary for *France* to have theſe two Singularities, that thoſe who copy them might have Originals well mark'd for both Sexes.

There's another Sort of People not much known in other Countries, and which we often hear mention'd in this, with Envy and Contempt: Theſe

Theſe are your (*i*) *Partiſans*; they are, generally ſpeaking, very inconſiderable, but they acquire, in a ſhort Time, immenſe Riches, ſuch as put a Man ſuddenly in a State of pleaſing himſelf, whereby all his extravagant Fancies are diſcover'd. Riches likewiſe ſhew us the Effect which change of Conditions produces among other Men: Grandees that thought of nothing but keeping themſelves at as great Diſtance as poſſible from the Commonalty, now make a great deal of Haſte to become the Sons-in-law of theſe Gentlemen. Ladies come down to them from a high Rank, ſay they, and throw themſelves into their Arms. Such is the Power of Riches.

——Vel Cœlo poſſunt deducere Lunam,
——————Et vertere ſidera retro.

But theſe Riches ſeldom laſt long; whether it be that theſe *Partiſans* ruin themſelves by their great Expences, or that they give People an Opportunity of ſtripping them. Think of *Lucian's Wiſhes*, repreſented on a great Theatre; the Actors appear in great Splendour, and attract the Eyes of the Audience, they make ſome laugh, others admire, and then they vaniſh.

There's room for Sharpers, in my Opinion, in this Place; they are very numerous, they excel in their Trade, and are reckon'd among the Singularities of *France*. I don't ſpeak of Cheats, ſuch are in all Countries, tho' in greater Numbers in *France* than elſewhere, becauſe there are more Gameſters in it. By Sharpers I mean People that form daring Enterprizes, and Stratagems that ſurprize by their Novelty, and which they execute with Prudence and Bravery. All ſorts of military Virtues are requiſite to enable them to ſucceed in this dangerous Trade, and no doubt but theſe ſmall Conquerors deſerve to

(*i*) *Theſe are People concern'd in the Revenues.*

to have their Proweſs celebrated. Accordingly they have their Hiſtoriographer, but he has writ only the ſmalleſt Part of their Exploits. They are encreaſed ſince, both in Parts and Number, and are now come to ſuch a Degree of Perfection, that if excelling in a Profeſſion might intitle People to Encomiums, theſe ought to have their Panegyriſt as well as their Hiſtoriographer. In all Probability 'tis the Neceſſity of making a handſome Figure, in order to be of the Number of thoſe call'd polite People, that gives a Riſe to theſe Sharpers that do all the Miſchief in the Shape of polite or faſhionable People. Let us paſs on to thoſe of better Diſtinction, and conſider the *French* Nation on the beſt Side.

The Nobility here are truly noble on ſeveral Accounts; Generoſity, Frankneſs and Honour, wherein they are very nice, and they don't diſtinguiſh themſelves more by any Thing than the Sword. The Abbots diſpute Civility with them, of which the Nobility was poſſeſs'd, and out-do them in the Article of Leiſure, which was one of their Privileges. They are obliged to give it up, on Account of the Expence, not only to People of Buſineſs, but likewiſe to the Clergy, who, ſeeing that Riches are very ſuitable to Men and Dignities, have join'd them together, and make themſelves as remarkable, on that Account, as by the Prerogatives they enjoy. Politeneſs, which ſeems to become Perſons of Quality beſt, might likewiſe diſtinguiſh them, but the whole Nation thinks they have a Right to it, and ſo far the Nobles have but little Advantage of others, and there remains but one ſhining Diſtinction for them, that is their Bravery, which they carry very far. 'Tis not long

ſince they piqued themſelves on it ſo much, and ſo unſeaſonably, that they would have been exterminated, had not the King interpoſed, by puniſhing Duels with the utmoſt Severity. Theſe Gentlemen form themſelves for War even in the Company of Women, which are oppoſite Schools, but being join'd together, they make the Man of the World the gallant Man. They take a Pleaſure, as it were, in living above their Income, and the Debts of a *French* Gentleman are almoſt reckon'd among the Things annexed to his Nobility. That is the Reaſon they are not ſo ſcrupulous in preſerving it entire, as they were formerly, and that they ſeldom loſe an Opportunity of re-eſtabliſhing their Affairs, when they meet with a rich Merchant's or Partiſan's Daughter; and the Folly of the *French* in Matters of Grandeur and Quality makes this Remedy very eaſy to them.

Give me leave to ſay ſomething to you of the military Men, which I do the more willingly, becauſe they are an Honour to the *French* Nation, and that I am beſt acquainted with them of all Ranks of People in *France*. There's more good among them than one would expect, and, perhaps, more than can be found in Societies or Orders, where one might reaſonably imagine there ſhould be moſt. I know not whether this be owing to the Danger which People of this Profeſſion are expos'd to, or a particular Point of Honour eſtabliſh'd among them; I have always obſerv'd leſs Shew and more Reality among military Men, generally ſpeaking, than others. Their Friendſhip is ſtricter, and does not ſtand in need of ſo many frivolous Shifts. Their Out-ſide is more eaſy, and 'tis among them that the *French* Behaviour is corrected; Politeneſs

neſs is leſs refined, and Converſation more natural. Perhaps, the Reaſon of their having theſe, and other Advantages is, becauſe they don't read the faſhionable Books, which are, no doubt, one of the Sources of the far-fetch'd Ways we obſerve in the Character of the *French*. Beſides, 'tis evident that War, or the Service itſelf, produces the good Qualities of the People of this Calling, for the Regiments that are of a long ſtanding have more of theſe Men of Merit, and have even the Reputation of it. There's another Thing very particular in their Conduct, and is much to their Honour; we ſee them now and then quit the Army and become Religious; and 'tis common with them, on theſe Occaſions, to make choice of ſome rigid Order, where they paſs the Remainder of their Days in Auſterities.

I believe I have forgot to tell you ſomething that is much to the Honour of the *French*, or at leaſt, that I have only given you a hint of it. They love their King more than other Nations; it ſeems as if all the Eſteem they have of themſelves, or their Nation, was united in his Perſon, and, I believe, there are but few *Frenchmen* that would not rather derive their Glory and Happineſs from the King's Favour, than from any other Advantages which they might have. Their King never does them any Wrong; it muſt be always his Miniſters. There's nothing good but what comes from him, and all the Glory he acquires turns to their good. If one ſhould ſay the *French* adore their King, perhaps he would not ſay too much; at leaſt their Manner of expreſſing the Encomiums they give him, is not very far from it; when they aſſure him very ſeriouſly, that all the People on the Earth would

think themſelves happy to be under his Government, and are ambitious of the *French* Name; if they don't make him a Deity, they give him room, at leaſt, to look upon himſelf as the Prince to whom all Praiſe is due, and they put themſelves under a Neceſſity of giving it to him. The Truth on't is, their Love for their King, which is ſo natural to them, muſt produce ſomething extraordinary, for the Prince that governs them now: Beſides the Majeſty of his Perſon, and his being poſſeſs'd of Qualities that diſtinguiſh him, and are agreeable to the *French* in many Reſpects; he extends the Monarchy further than any of his Predeceſſors, and makes the Nation more famous than ever it was, that is, he pleaſes the *French* in the ſenſible Part. But what proves this Prince not to be an ordinary one, and that they may make him the Object of all their Praiſes, is that he ſupports them without any Emotion, like the *Roman*, recorded in Hiſtory, that had Strength enough to bear the Heap of Garlands and Flowers thrown upon him by the *Greeks* at the *Olympick* Games.

After all I have ſaid of the *French*, and their Opinion concerning the reſt of the World, I muſt ſay ſomething to you, Sir, of the Opinion the reſt of the World have of them, which is not entirely what they ſuppoſe it to be, and is occaſion'd by their imitating them in their Behaviour and Apparel. Theſe things are, no doubt, very concluſive, and give room for crying up this Nation, that is fond of being cry'd up; but, in ſhort, they don't impoſe ſo generally on the reſt of the World, but that there may be ſome that winch, and agree in their Idea of the Nation. They have the Concurrence of Strangers, that travel for their Pleaſure; they will ſooner

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go to *France* than elſewhere. Many of them who have been acquainted with People of Merit in *France*, think of them with Pleaſure, and affirm they have not found in other Countries any like what they ſaw in *France*. The *French* may likewiſe value themſelves on Account of thoſe that apply themſelves to the Exerciſes, thoſe that love Dreſſing, Furniture, and all Sorts of Toys and curious Trifles; while this Taſte continues they will love *France* and praiſe it. There's another Party ſtill more conſiderable in its Intereſt, theſe are your profeſs'd Gallants, Gameſters, all that devote themſelves to Diverſions, and eſpecially the Perſons that furniſh them; all that choice Gang the Poet ſpeaks of;

Ambubajarum Collegia, Pharmacopolæ,
Mendici, Mimæ, Balatrones; hoc genus omne.

The Readers of Romances and Novels, Stories, Collections of Poems, Mercures Gallants, and other Works of the Time, which are peculiar to the *French*, can't fail of having a high Opinion of them. I believe the *French* pleaſe them every where, and that the young People, every where, are pleas'd with *French* Ways, and the Idea they have of the Manner of Living in this Country; 'tis this that makes their Party conſiderable, the Years of Diſcretion are not ſo favourable to them: The *French* Sprightlineſs begins to lag the other Side of thirty, and the cool Blood of People come to Maturity, is ſcarce compatible with it. All free Nations, or thoſe that value Liberty, don't look upon the *French* as Models, and are far from admiring them. The People call'd Philoſophers, that is, thoſe that ſee with their own Eyes, and have juſt Sentiments of Things, laugh at them. Thoſe that have any Thing of the *Miſanthrope* hate them: Such as love

a plain and quiet Life, the old-fashion'd People, that will not change their Way of Living, nor employ their Time in visiting, and preserve their Houses from the Manners of the Time, which they call pernicious and extravagant, and some other particular People have an ill Will towards them. They have Reason likewise to fear such as are clownish, that call every Thing by its proper Name, and give hard Names to many Things they mention in *France* with Applause. But the *French* are still in less Esteem among People that know them only in other Countries, and by Persons whom Chance rather than Choice has made them acquainted with; these are prepossess'd against the Nation, and a more favourable Chance, or their Friends that have been in *France*, must set them right.

On this Occasion, I must acquaint you with a Singularity of the *French*, which has been taken Notice of long since, but we have not been yet undeceiv'd about it; that is, that 'tis better to know the *French* in *France* than Abroad; which is quite contrary to other People, who are thought to be more sociable and complaisant in foreign Countries than at Home. And in effect, a *Frenchman* in his own Country is seldom displeas'd at a Foreigner's not being thoroughly versed in *French* Ways, he is satisfy'd with their Endeavours, and being in Expectation of their improving, he keeps them in Heart: For 'tis an Article in their *Art of Living*, not to discourage those that come among them, and do Homage to the *French* Character. But as soon as a *Frenchman* comes into another Country, being surpriz'd to see all the People differ from him, he can't contain himself any longer, and flies from the Sight of so many dreadful Things.

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Behaviour and the *Art of Living* being a Kind of Religion with him, he is poſſeſs'd with Zeal to make Proſelytes, and undertakes to convert a whole City, rather than conform in the leaſt on his Part. When he is at any Court, he takes it ill that they ſhould pretend to any Politeneſs with ſuch ſtrange Ways; he views them on all Sides, makes the Model for People every where with ſo much the more Willingneſs, becauſe he finds People every where ready to frame themſelves by him. To ſee him alone, and hear him talk of the *French* Way of Living, a Man is apt to have a great Opinion of *France*; but as ſoon as he has any Opportunity of meeting other *Frenchmen*, and that the Queſtion is really about forming this agreeable Society, there's no more room for this great Opinion, and theſe People that are ſo ſociable in their own Country, ceaſe to be ſo in others: There moſt of them prefer the Acquaintance of Strangers to that of their Countrymen, and the leaſt Matter of Intereſt ſets them at Variance. 'Tis then they injure and diſgrace themſelves among thoſe they converſe with, and they do it ſo much to the purpoſe, that they give as bad an Opinion of their Nation, as they gave a good one, by what they related before to its Advantage. So that one may conclude from all this, that the *French* ought to ſtay in *France*, where their Manners and Ways are in their proper Place; and that there are *Frenchmen* enough in the World, for the Variety of the Character which it ought to have in it; but to magnify this Character, by limiting it as we do, and making it anſwer the Intentions of the *French*, ill anſwers that of Nature, and demonſtrates that we are but little acquainted with the good ſhe

has done us, and is juſt as if we made Parterres and Walks of the Meadows and Fields ſhe has given us.

You'll ſay 'tis not very polite to write three long Letters about *Paris* and the *French* Nation, and to ſay no more of the Women. I muſt ſpeak of them more at large, and in ſuch a Manner as may, perhaps, make you think me ſtill leſs polite. I have had no Occaſion for particular Enquiries to inform myſelf of their Character and Manners; common Fame, which does not vary with reſpect to them, and agrees entirely with what is related by the profeſs'd Gallants, makes them ſufficiently known to every one that is not curious to know them by Experience. The *French* Women are not over handſome, which the *French* themſelves allow to be true: As to their agreeable Ways, in which they muſt ſurpaſs the Women of other Countries, I don't know whether they would affect you much, and whether you would not think them too forward. The eſſential Qualities of the fair Sex, Baſhfulneſs, Modeſty and Chaſtity, are, no doubt, the Things that make them agreeable, as well as Merit, I don't ſay in the Eyes of a Philoſopher, or a Man of the old Times, but in thoſe of every Man, that is in a proper State of judging of them. The Manners now in vogue have inſenſibly taken away that Kind of Taſte from the *French*; what makes a Woman amiable in their Eyes, is Sprightlineſs and Wit, which is a perpetual Subject of Ridicule for the Nation. The Women of Quality, eſpecially, diſdain this Baſhfulneſs and ſcrupulous Shame-facedneſs. They ſeem to them to be mean and affected, only fit for Tradeſmen's Wives, and to ſhun this extream, they

they ſhun Modeſty. They look upon it as a Thing that regards the others, (for whom they will not have any Reſpect) rather than themſelves, or their own Character, and ſo give Way to Liberties that are not ſuitable to them. You would be of Opinion they abandon their Character in a great many Things: They are ſo much given to intriguing, that they even meddle with Politicks, and all Kind of Buſineſs is done thro' their Means. They likewiſe abandon their Character in Intrigues of another Sort, to which they are naturally more inclinable; 'tis not to Tenderneſs they give Way, which might claim ſome Indulgence for this weak and tender Sex, that are expoſed by reaſon of the Manners of the Country to the Deſigns of the Men who are experienced in the Trade; they are overcome by Expences and Noiſe. Noiſe in any Senſe does not diſcourage them: As the Men are intrepid in War, ſo the Women are in Love; they look Danger in the Face, and notwithſtanding all the Examples of Indiſcretion they have before their Eyes, and all the idle Stories that are made, yet great Numbers of them run the ſame riſque, and favour the People that are proud of their good Graces. Some do it in Verſe, and the Poems made on thoſe Subjects, are call'd *Enjoyments*, and are put without any Diſguiſe among the Sonnets and Madrigalls in their Collections of Poetry, as the Women of Gallantry are among thoſe that have a good Reputation. In Company the Women ſpeak loud, and take upon them to decide Matters; you don't ſee them in any Diſorder, their Behaviour is not eaſy and natural, and they have nothing like an Air of Innocence. Every Thing they ſay and do, has a Turn of Rote in it, which does not become

Women

Women, in my Opinion; and, I believe, you'll agree with me, that their Wit ought to be hid almoſt as much as their Bodies; and that they ſhould let us have no more than a Glimpſe of it. But here they are from any ſuch Management; the Women ſhew both their Bodies and their Wit. They forget that they laviſh away their Charms by ſhewing them always, and that the Men ſhould put the Women in mind of them. As they are accuſtom'd to obliging Things, and it being a Rule to ſpeak to them after that Manner, it becomes very eaſy to them; but you are not much touched with it, you think that Softneſs was not deſign'd for them; others have ſaid it already, or it has been ſaid already to others, is rather a Phraſe than Argument. In ſhort, as the Men in *France* give too much Way to Trifles, which makes them ſcarcely Men, the Women have too much Boldneſs, and are ſcarcely Women. The continual Commerce between both Sexes cauſes, as it were, an Exchange of Characters, which makes each Sex derogate ſomething from its proper Character; but the Women (whoſe tender Character ſuffers leſs than is obſerv'd,) fall into a Miſtake, and excel in a great many Things that are out of their Province. They ſing Airs that are too lincentious, and they ſing them well. They drink hard at Table, and they do it agreeably. They underſtand Gaming as well as the Men. They go a Hunting with them, and come ſo near the Men in every Thing, that they are ſcarcely Women. I ſpeak of the Sex in general, and, no doubt, the Ill I ſay of it, falls ſhort of the Good which might be ſaid of great Numbers that have preſerv'd their native Charms by means of a good Education, and have added every Thing that

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can adorn their Sex; Women with thoſe Advantages are what a Man of Merit is among his own Sex; that is, they are amiable above all the Women in the World.

The Maidens deſerve a diſtinct Article which ſhall be very ſhort. 'Tis a Rule in *France*, that they ſhould not make themſelves be ſpoke of; thoſe that act otherwiſe are taken Notice of, and can ſcarce repair the loſs. Their Mothers have a watchful Eye over them, and deny them the Liberty of ſeeing Men in private. But their own Manner of ſeeing the Men gives the Daughters a bad Example, and 'tis to be fear'd the Example, at long run, has its Effect.

I am now come back again to the *French* in general, and muſt add a Word about the *Engliſh*, who are the Subject of the firſt Letters I writ to you. The *French*, like all other Nations, have Merit in their general Character, and are, perhaps, of all Nations the moſt human; they deſerve to be lov'd; but in their Uniformity they dare not truſt to proper or particular Characters, and, generally ſpeaking, they have no other than that of the Nation. We owe leſs to the *Engliſh* that love us leſs; but, in other Reſpects, they deſerve Men's Attention and Eſteem; and tho' the general Character of their Nation were but of little value, which none ſhould venture to maintain, the *Engliſh* would ſtill be conſiderable by their Number of particular Characters and Originals. They have likewiſe a Right to our eſteem, by giving us an Example of People that dare make uſe of their Reaſon, and know how to live independantly, in which they diſcover more of the Duties of Men, and more Freedom than by the Liberty which they have preſerv'd, with Regard to their mild Government.

vernment. The *French*, on the other hand, tho' in their Dependance on Cuſtom, which, do doubt, is an unworthy one, and much more than that they are reproach'd with, in Reſpect to their deſpotick Government, have the ſociable Virtues; they know how to live among themſelves, and with Men in general. The *Engliſhman* has Courage to take Reſolutions on great Occaſions, where the Happineſs or Unhappineſs of Life are at Stake, and nothing affects him more than the Diſgrace of failing in his Deſigns. Beſides, he has little Dependance on Opinion, and in Converſation he has more Satisfaction in ſpeaking the Truth, than in ſaying obliging Things, to make himſelf agreeable. The *Frenchman* eſteems People's Opinion at a high Rate, and endeavours to make them think well of him, as well as to make others pleas'd with themſelves; from thence proceed the many ſoft and flattering Things they ſpeak in Company. His great Concern is about the Diſgrace which accompanies Ridicule and Singularity, becauſe he may be expoſed by them, and in lieu of making ſtrong Reſolutions, and cutting Difficulties ſhort, which muſt otherwiſe happen, he employs his Cunning for a Remedy. He is never at a loſs on any Emergency, and behaves himſelf dexterouſly in Caſe of unexpected Accidents, which are frequent in Life, and require Preſence of Mind, and is gallant enough to help even others out of Danger. The Way of Living of the *Engliſh* ſuppoſes more eminent Qualities, and the *French*, in theirs, muſt have them in greater Numbers. The *Engliſh* not only value their Nation at a high Rate, and prefer it to all others, but they have likewiſe an Eſteem for every Individual in it: 'Tis a Nation where

People

People are vain on their own Accounts; and the *Engliſh* make the *Engliſh* Nation. The *French*, on the other hand, prefer themſelves to other Men, chiefly becauſe they are *French*; ſo that they muſt have more Vivacity, more Wit than theſe *Engliſh* or *Germans:* Thus the *French* Nation makes the *French*. The *Engliſh* by their Contempt of others, the *French* eſpecially, look upon them thro' the Sides, that, in truth, make them contemptible; ſuch as idle Projects, Indifferency about Liberty, their too great Paſſion for Trifles, in a Word, the little Merit they obſerve in moſt Strangers. If Men were allow'd to deſpiſe one another, we could not have much Reaſon to reproach the *Engliſh* on this Account. Thus they don't conceal their Contempt of us, and they dare make us ſenſible of it; but they behave themſelves otherwiſe to Strangers that have any Merit. When the *French* deſpiſe other People, the Things they have in view are no Way capable of making them contemptible; their different Ways, little Wit or Knowledge in the Art of Living, or a cool Temper, which they take for a mean Underſtanding. In a Word, the *French* deſpiſe human Race, becauſe they are not all *French*. They conceal their Contempt for us, or at leaſt they think ſo, and they have Reaſon on their Side in that Reſpect; but this hidden Contempt is the more durable, and it rarely forſakes them. To this they add the Deſire of ſetting right the reſt of the World, and ruling them: They look upon themſelves as the civiliz'd People, that are already above others, by their Wit and Behaviour, and want nothing but to be ſuperiour to them in Power. This Ambition is, perhaps, the worſt Part of the *French* Character, and one of the Things that diſtinguiſhes them

them from the *Engliſh*, who are content with thinking their own Way of Living the beſt, and allow the reſt of the World may govern themſelves as they think fit. As to other Things the *French* neither deſerve the Hatred of ſuch Numbers of People, the *Engliſh* eſpecially, nor to be admired as they are: In my Opinion, the Influence they ought to have on thoſe that know them, is to love them and laugh at them a little. The ill that may be ſaid of them takes up a great deal of room; but it generally extends no further than to ſmall Matters. 'Tis a Liſt of Trifles they ſet too high a value upon, by which they make themſelves little. The Good is ſooner ſaid, but it relates to eſſential Qualities that influence all Parts of Life, and whereby we benefit on a hundred Occaſions. The Ill that may be ſaid of the *Engliſh*, as well as the Good, is more conſiderable, and does not lean ſo much on Ridicule, as it does on the Bad; 'tis more aſtoniſhing than diverting; but 'tis not ſo general as the Ill that may be ſaid of the *French*, which brings Things to an Equality. I think, I would rather be a deſerving *Engliſhman*, than a deſerving *Frenchman*; I would likewiſe rather meet a *Frenchman* of Merit, than an *Engliſh*; as there would be more Pleaſure in finding a Treaſure of Gold Coins, which might be made uſe of immediately, than to find one of Ingots, which muſt be firſt turned into Specie. On the whole, to give in a few Words, and by a ſenſible Compariſon, a juſt Idea of what may be blameable in the Character of theſe two Nations; one may ſay, that in one, the high Road is cover'd with Dirt, that the Crowd walk in it and are bedagled, as are even moſt of thoſe that go another

ther Way, as it happens in a dirty Country, where 'tis no Diſhonour to be dirtied; that in the other Nation the high Road is more beaten, and full of Duſt, which ſpreads over the whole Country, and penetrates every Thing; that its Inhabitants are cover'd with it, and made uniform; that few People dare go into the By-ways to ſhake off the Duſt, becauſe 'tis highly eſteem'd in the Country, and that they make a great Shew of it. One of theſe Nations reproaches the other with her Dirt, and values herſelf on being leſs dirty. The other prefers her Dirt to the Duſt; ſhe takes a particular Pleaſure in ſhunning it at that Rate, and diſdains theſe duſty Folks. That is, that the great Opinion which Nations have of themſelves, and the Contempt they have of one another, redoubles the Ridicule of Self-love among the private People, and it will be found in the End, that 'tis an Advantage to be born in a Nation that has no Reaſon to boaſt ſo much of the Name it bears.

I embrace you, SIR, *&c.*

LETTER

LETTER V.

Believe, Sir, I have told you every Thing I had to ſay of the *French*; however, I am come to them again. I have ſaid little or nothing of their Wit, which is one of the moſt important Things in their Character; the Subject, in my Opinion, deſerves to be handled more at large.

'Tis difficult to tell what Wit is; nothing varies more, and Men don't agree about it, otherwiſe than in this, that the different Things which they take for Wit, are moſt commonly of little value; ſome make it conſiſt in the Facility of ſpeaking and expreſſing one's ſelf handſomely; others in the Art of telling a Story to Advantage. This Man places it in Buffonry and Jeſting; that there in Points of Wit and Equivocation. Some think it muſt be in Raillery and Slander. Moſt People are poſitive 'tis to be found in florid Diſcourſes, and wherever there's much Fancy or Invention. They give it as many different Shapes as a (*k*) Spirit is capable of aſſuming, to underſtand the Word in its proper Senſe, and, I believe, 'tis from thence it takes its Name. It may be ſaid likewiſe, in order to make the Etymology compleat, that as People often think 'tis where 'tis not,

(*k*) *In* French *Eſprit ſignifies Ghoſt as well as Wit.*

not, ſo on the other hand they often over-look it, where it really is, or at leaſt moſt of them do ſo. Tho' there may be ſuch a Thing as Wit, and it differ'd much from what I have ſaid, if 'tis of value, as it certainly is, 'tis not, however, that which is commonly ſet upon it, or at leaſt its Uſe is not ſo general as is imagin'd. The *French* look on it as an eſſential Thing, as one of the Qualities whereby a Gentleman ought to ſet himſelf forward, and in my Opinion, 'tis ſo far from it, that every Gentleman may be very well without it; I don't ſay as to himſelf, where 'tis eaſy to comprehend 'tis not of any great Uſe, but even with Regard to others, and in Society, where it ought to be in its proper Place. Wit is an Ornament to Man, and can't be acquired; Nature gives it to us, and by that, as well as the ſmall Number of People ſhe beſtows it upon, ſhe demonſtrates that we don't want it.

That which puts Men in a State of converſing together, and is proper for all Times, and all Countries, is good Senſe, which is a Quality eſſential to Man. We may, perhaps, look upon it as the Viſta of the Soul, which is given him to know the Truth, the eſſential Part of Things, and to benefit by them. For it appears that 'tis partly for that End that Man was made and ſent into the World, where ſo many Things offer themſelves to him; and good Senſe ought to be, in my Opinion, that which ſhould conduct and enable him to fulfil the Deſign of his Creation in this Reſpect. This good Senſe has its proper Language, and this Language is ſufficient for us. If our Eyes are good, Objects will not be wanting, and there will be enough to pleaſe ourſelves with.

For among Men, thoſe that ſee clearly, and refer what they ſee to an End worthy of Man, are poſſeſs'd of this good Senſe, and have from that Time, in my Opinion, all that the Nature of Man requires, as he is a reaſonable Creature. Thoſe that chooſe rather to devote themſelves to the diſcerning the particular Ways whereby all Things are varied and embelliſhed, and pleaſe themſelves in varying and embelliſhing their Diſcourſes, may well be the People of Wit. In that Caſe, Wit would be nothing elſe than good Senſe refin'd; and it would be allow'd to be a great Ornament to the Man that had a ſhare of it, and likewiſe that it ſhould concur to the ſame End with the good Senſe, of which 'tis a Part; that it muſt benefit by every Thing, lead us to Good, by repreſenting it in a more lively or more agreeable Manner, and induce us to avoid Evil, by making it frightful and odious in our Eyes. Thus Wit might add ſomething to good Senſe, and ſtrengthen it by embelliſhing it; it would have that Effect, at leaſt, with Regard to People that are affected with Splendour, and give way to it. But Wit, generally ſpeaking, except it be well managed, or in ſuch a Manner as not to be taken notice of, has this Inconveniency, that it influences more with Regard to itſelf, in order to raiſe Admiration, than in recommending Truth by making it agreeable, and 'tis always true that good Senſe alone, without any Ornament, when 'tis properly enforced, and ſets off Truth to Advantage, is much preferable to Wit.

If you deſire to be more exactly informed in the Point of Diſtinction between good Senſe and Wit, and would have me Reaſon upon it with more Seriouſneſs, you ſhall have my Thoughts

Thoughts on that Topick. I imagine two Faculties in Man's Underſtanding that anſwer to the Good and the Beautiful, the two Perfections of the Objects he has before him. That which correſponds with the Good, and ſhall have the firſt Rank in our new Syſtem, ſhall be that which knows and diſcovers the eſſential Part of Things. It will be proper for it to have a Body, (if one may ſpeak after that Manner,) and Depth, and ſhall contain more Truth than it ſeems to do: This is it that I'll call good Senſe. I repreſent it to myſelf as the Male Faculty of the Soul, (if I may uſe that Term,) and is in my Opinion, chiefly proper for Men. The Beautiful ſhall be what accompanies the Good, and embelliſhes it; it ſhall have ſomething more of Shew, and make us take Notice of Relations that are agreeable on Account of their Delicacy, as well as their Exactneſs. This ſhall be the Female Faculty of the Soul, as it may, perhaps, be that which ſhould come to the Women's Share. Good Senſe and Wit ſhall have Truth equally for a Foundation, and muſt not ſubſiſt without it; and as good Senſe, tho' without Ornament, is ſtill beautiful, ſo likewiſe Wit ſhall not deſerve the Name if it has not the Good, and the Solid with the Beautiful. Every Work where the Beautiful is predominant, ſhall be a Work of Wit, and that where the Good rules, ſhall be a Work of good Senſe. When both the Good and the Beautiful are found together, and concur to the ſame End, and that Wit does not make itſelf remarkable, being only an Appendix to good Senſe, but ſtill has its Effect, as being embodyed with it, we will acknowledge this Mixture to have ſomething in it very agreeable, and eſteem at a high rate

the Works that have it. But we will ſtill have a greater value for thoſe where the Good excels, and diſpenſe with all Embeliſhment; ſuch are beautiful in themſelves, and far ſuperiour to thoſe that have any Mixture. 'Tis principally in theſe Works of the firſt Rank, which are very few, that we meet with the Sublime, which few attain to, and whereof we ſcarce dare venture to determine the Idea. [Should it not conſiſt in ſetting off to the greateſt Advantage a Truth that has Grandeur in it, in bringing it back to its Simplicity and Unity, by the Manner of conceiving and expreſſing it;] would not Wit, at that rate, have its Sublime likewiſe, and would not that be the Natural of ſome particular Kind, I mean when it has as much good Senſe as Delicacy? That is the Purity of Wit, and we muſt always come back to the Purity, as being that which is the eſſential Part of the Sublime, of whatever Kind it is. ['Tis very rare to find the Natural in Works of Wit;] and People of Taſte are not only more charm'd with it than the moſt ſparkling Thoughts; but even when 'tis ſuch as we ſuppoſe, it has ſtill this Character of the Sublime, that the Original is unknown. It does not depend on us to form it and enrich our Works with it; it ſeems to be born of itſelf, and it offers itſelf to the Wit, as belonging to it, and almoſt as if Wit had no Share in it. We muſt acknowledge to the Honour of the *French*, that they know it better than others. Let us return to their Wit, and to thoſe among them that ſhine moſt with it, and ſee how far we ought to value it. Here again you muſt endure a great deal of Reaſoning more than you expected, or I intended.

That

That the Good, in all Sorts of Writings, may ſubſiſt without the Beautiful, at leaſt without that which the Imagination, or the Vivacity of Wit can add, is very certain; and the excellent Productions which we have in this Kind are Proofs of it. 'Tis now a Queſtion, if the Beautiful can alſo ſubſiſt without the Good, or the Agreeable without the Profitable; we muſt come back to this Queſtion, and conſider of the Value to be put on Works of this Kind: Thoſe of *Voiture* and *Saraſin*, for Example, who were, I believe, the firſt of the Wits of their Days, when Wit ſeems to have had its Period. I don't at all heſitate about this Queſtion, and what I have ſaid already, I ſay again: In the Productions of Wit, the Beautiful cannot be ſeparate from the Good, as in Nature the Beauty of Man can't be ſeparate from Health, which cauſes it; without the Good there can be no true Beauty: For Man being made for the Good, he cannot be without it, except he ceaſes to be what he is; and it being the Nature of Good to communicate itſelf to every Thing ſuſceptible of it, he cannot avoid introducing it into all the Productions of his Wit. Man then ſhou'd incline to Good, as his End, and turn all his good Senſe, and likewiſe all his Wit to that Side, if he would make any uſe of it, ſince Wit ought not to be ſeparate from good Senſe, and that in the End, nothing but the Good deſerves to be adorned with the Beautiful. 'Tis obvious enough from thence, that the true Productions of Wit are not of the Nature of thoſe of *Voiture* and *Saraſin*, that have nothing but the Beautiful, or ſomething to pleaſe, nor any other End but to cauſe ſome agreeable Surprize. *Voiture* and *Saraſin* were profeſs'd Wits, that adorned

the Beautiful, which they made their chief Aim, with the Good which they might have; but they had it not in ſuch abundance as to make it run over in the Productions of Wit; that is, that *Voiture* and *Sarafin* could not fail of doing what they did, they could not avoid changing the Order which makes the Beauty of the Objects of Wit, and dazzle Men with Shew. They were not thoroughly acquainted with the true Value of the Good, ſo as to improve it, and conſequently their Works, not ſquaring with the Condition of Man founded on the Good, cannot be ſo valuable as People imagine. At the hazard of advancing a great Paradox, I ſay the Price of Productions of Wit, and generally of all thoſe where there's room for the Good, depends chiefly on the Value of the Author, or the Good that is in him; that his Character influences the whole, and gives it its Dignity, more than all the Wit of thoſe Compoſitions, and that it belongs therefore to Men who have a great deal of the Good to form the Beautiful and adorn themſelves with it, to ſport with Productions of Wit, and make others Sport, none but thoſe can do it nobly. Let us conſider the Thing another Way; 'tis an Affair of Importance, and 'tis it that leads us to a true Knowledge of the Value of Compoſitions of Wit.

In my Opinion, all Writings that are rational and ſolid, tend to diſcover the different Relations which Things may have, whether among themſelves, to form a well proportion'd Whole, or to Man that is placed in their Center, and muſt probably have ſome Advantage by it. The Diſcovery of the Relations, of things among themſelves, requires nothing but Attention and Judg-

Judgment, and the greateſt Part of thoſe that love to make uſe of their Reaſon, turn it that Way. We ſee infinite Numbers of theſe Productions, and thoſe of Wit that have any Reality, are commonly of this Kind. The Diſcovery of the Relations which Things have to Man, requires, beſides the Soundneſs of Reaſon, Soundneſs of Heart, and Inclination for Order. For, to be ſenſible of theſe Relations, Man muſt be in Order himſelf, and be ſuch that all Things may refer to him as their chief Aim. Every good Man is attentive to that which ſurrounds him, and turns to this ſort of Diſcovery, to which he makes the other ſubordinate; for he apprehends the Relations which Things have among themſelves don't concern him no further than as they relate to him, and he conducts himſelf by what concerns him. If a Man of this Character goes to write, his Works muſt be extraordinary; the Profitable is there mixed with the Agreeable, or rather, the Agreeable is introduced to improve the Profitable and the True, which flows from him more naturally than the Agreeable. The Wits we have mentioned, *Voiture* and *Saraſin*, were not in that State, they gave no Attention to theſe Relations; and the Agreeable, inſtead of embelliſhing their Productions, becomes the eſſential Part of them: Being Men of a lively and fruitful Invention, and having Leiſure enough beſides, they undertook to invent Relations, whether among Things themſelves, or between Things, and the idle Man with Regard to Good, which ought to be his Occupation; and they have embelliſh'd theſe Relations with every Thing the Fertility of Wit could afford. Such Novelties muſt pleaſe the Men they were in-

vented for, since they confirm them in their Idleness, and there's no room to be astonish'd, if, by their Ignorance of the true Relations which Regard the Man that is active and bent upon Good, they admire these Productions, and look upon them as the Master-pieces of human Wit. Neither is there any room to be surpriz'd if those that own these invented Relations to be of no Value, should take Occasion from thence to despise the Productions of Wit, of whatever Nature they may be, and deny that Works of Wit are of any Advantage to the World.

Let us not be so severe, and agree there's some sporting in Men's Discourses, since Nature gives them Wit and forms them with an Inclination to sporting; but let us ask them what are its Dignity and Use, as the Diversions that regard the Body have theirs, and help to make it vigorous and active. A Man of Sense does not divert himself either with Dancing on the Ropes, or Juggling, but he makes choice of genteel Exercises, and none blames him on that Account: Let us do the same Thing with Respect to Men of Understanding; let us have noble Diversions that are proper for us, and by recreating us give us Encouragement to return to our Work. That the Aim of Works of Wit should be the Good made agreeable; that they should instruct us by their sporting, and even without discovering any Design of instructing, if People would have it so. That those Men who have a Talent for Drollery may practice it if they please, they ought to do it as Men that play with Children, to whom they give sound Ideas of every Thing they speak to them about, and not as Children that play the Fool with other Children. That every Man of Wit

set

ſet the Price which Things have with Relation to Man. For every Thing being made in order to lay before his Eyes certain Truths, which in the main regard the Value of Things, every Thing referring to them one Way or another, every Production of a Man of Genius muſt have this Mark of Reality to contain theſe Relations and this Value, and make them known to thoſe that are ignorant of them. That is proper for a Man of Senſe, as well in his Sports as in his ſerious Concerns, and 'tis it that gives them Dignity. Every Thing muſt likewiſe be handled in Proportion to its Value, and by that alſo, the Price of every Thing in theſe Productions, being mark'd as it were, they may be of uſe to that Kind of Knowledge, that of all others is the moſt profitable, and to which all others muſt refer. At that rate every Thing in Nature may be a Subject of Diſcourſe for Men, and there may be room for Wit every where, in ſmall Things as much, and, perhaps, more than in great, for they have the ſame Original, and all of them deſerve our Attention, ſince Nature lays them all before our Eyes. Good Senſe without any Ornament is beſt pleaſed with Things of Importance, leaving Wit to ſport herſelf with little Things, and Wit, on her Part, accommodates herſelf to this Partition and naturally inclines to the Little, as being fitteſt to play with. Let us play then with all that is trifling and little in the World, and put a hundred and a hundred Things to that uſe, in Expectation of finding another for them, and that Wit ſhould find its own, if it be not that of Sporting. Let us return to the Works of *Voiture* and *Saraſin*.

The

The *French* value them at a high Rate, and they are Things of Importance in their Eyes. *Voiture* impoſes on them more than any other; they put him (as it were) at the Head of their Wits, and *(l)* one of the Number calls him their King. *Saraſin* has likewiſe his Admirers that extol him to the Skies, and have as much Reaſon to do ſo as thoſe of *Voiture*, if it be true that theſe Authors Kind of Writing is what People would improve. It muſt be acknowledged both of them excel in it: *Voiture* in his Letters, and *Saraſin* in ſome of his Poems, where, in my Opinion, he has the Advantage of the other. Never did People play the Child more agreeably than theſe Writers have done; never was there a more fruitful Imagination than theirs; the Flowers grow under their Hands, as they do under their Shepherds Feet; and they ſpread them on every Thing they touch; never was Work more marvellous in its Kind, and likewiſe never was any Kind of Writing more fantaſtical. To theſe two Authors I'll add *Balſac*, no leſs eſteem'd than they, and is the ſame in the grave and lofty Stile, that the others are in the familiar and gay, and I ſay they are Frolicks of Nature; that ſhe was willing to try how far the irregular Imagination of Men can be agreeable and ſublime; what kind of Things this Imagination would bring forth of itſelf, and the Time when ſhe ſhould have good Senſe at her Service, inſtead of being at the Service of good Senſe. Had not I ſaid already that the Good, or the Rational ought to be the eſſential Part of Men's Writings, I would ſay it in this Place, and inſiſt that the Rational

(*l*) Peliſſon *in his Diſcourſe on* Saraſin's *Works.*

nal may be ſaid to be, as it were, the Body of every Work. If an Author pleaſes himſelf with embelliſhing and making it agreeable, let him do ſo, then he may employ his Wit and adorn this Body. But Wit or Invention without a good Foundation, is like a Shadow cloath'd, or a Phantom; or, if I muſt make a Compariſon not to frightful, I ſay then 'tis with Wit as with Sugar, it ſweetens ſome particular Meats that would not be ſo grateful without it, and gives them a better Reliſh; it ſerves for Comfits, that People eat with Pleaſure, but of itſelf is not good. The Works of *Voiture* and *Saraſin*, eſpecially *Voiture*'s, are not Comfits, they are Sugar diſguis'd after different Ways; they are ſugar'd Paſte made into Figures, we ſee them for a Minute, and are pleaſed with them; but muſt be Children to eat much, or make a Meal of them.

We muſt make another Remark on *Voiture*'s Works, it relates particularly to his Letters, which are moſt eſteem'd, and which People would chiefly imitate. We write Letters to our Friends to let them know how Things are with us, and eſpecially if they any Way relate to them, and we write every Thing we could ſay in caſe we happen'd to meet them. The Perfection of theſe Sorts of Letters conſiſts then in their reſembling common Diſcourſe; that they be familiar and natural, and that they be not only free from the Umbrage of the Compoſition, but that they ſurpaſs it, and that the Language of the Heart be felt in them. This is far from the Character of *Voiture*'s Letters, inſtead of being natural, they are only witty, and imitate that Kind of Friendſhip that will not be imitated, they jeſt with it: This Writer feigns

feigns to feel what he does not feel, and aggravates it to make himſelf valuable, and ſeem to be much affected. This is a Jeſt with which the Perſons that receive ſuch Letters have no great Reaſon, in the main, to be pleas'd; for 'tis unhappy that our Friends, when they write to us, are oblig'd to have recourſe to Fiction, and that in every Letter we receive from them we find we are not yet advanced ſo far as to inſpire them with any Regard for us. Nor have the Perſons to whom *Voiture* writes, any Reaſon to be pleas'd with his Flattery, and extolling every one of them in their Turn above the reſt. Theſe Letters, in every Shape, have an Effect contrary to what they ought to have; they ſhew us *Voiture* as he is a Wit, but not *Voiture* as a Friend, and it ſeems that in him the Writer has devour'd the Man. In truth, all Profeſſions in which Men engage, are ſubject to this Inconveniency, and they rarely excel in any but at the Expence of the Foundation, which is Humanity. But that ought to have a particular exception, with Regard to Wit, which ſhould be the Ornament of Humanity, as the Flowers we ſee in the Meadows ſerve to adorn them, without leſſening any Thing of their Value. This Author ought to employ himſelf upon other Subjects, on Subjects of Drollery, and ſuch as Man ſhould be no Way intereſted in, for whom he has no Concern. Some of his Writings are of this Kind, and 'tis in them we muſt acknowledge his great Genius, and there place the Royalty to which they have raiſed him. *Voiture* is the King of Drollery and Trifles, and on the ſame Foot, ſhall be King of the Wits (if they deſire it,) of a Country where Trifles are eſteem'd, and his Encomium ſhall be

be exactly the ſame that *Saraſin* has given him, and by changing the Name might be given to *Saraſin* himſelf.

Veturius, nulli nugarum laude ſecondus. Let us proceed with examining their beſt Wits, of whom the *French* boaſt ſo much, and endeavour to find out the Price which ought to be ſet upon them.

They have famous Poets in the Drama, that is, in the beſt Productions of the Underſtanding. *Corneille* and *Racine* excell'd in Tragedy, and *Moliere* in Comedy. Let us endeavour to ſet a Price, not on theſe Poets, but on this Kind of Writing, where there's no more wanting to excel than to be reckon'd among the great Genius's, and in effect it requires more than an ordinary Capacity. Here the Relations extend to Man; but the End of the Drama being no more than to pleaſe us, theſe Relations cannot have all their Exactneſs, and, in general, the Poet can't avoid doing them Violence in order to accommodate them to the Taſte of the Publick. In Comedy he leſſens them, and puts them below Man, and in Tragedy he extends them to make them Heroick, and ſets them above him. Theſe Compoſitions, as well as moſt others, have no other Aim but Applauſe, and the whole, at laſt, tends to applaud the Poet. We will then applaud thoſe we have named, and ſay once more that they have excell'd in this Kind of Writing, and have, perhaps, carried it further than any that went before them. But we will not allow their Works to be as important as they are ingenious, and the Beautiful of the Drama ſhall no more impoſe on us to make us value it, than it does on the Publick, on whom it has no other Effect than

to

to pleaſe and amuſe. But now, Sir, to tell you what I think of this Affair, the writing of Tragedies, which they extol ſo much above that of Comedies, and which in Reality infinitely ſurpaſſes it, for the Excellence of the Subject, ſeems to me to be not only of little uſe, but leſs proper for the Stage, which has more of the comick Part, in one Senſe, than Comedy itſelf. The Stage is not made to give Men what they have not, ſublime Thoughts, which are the ſubject of Tragedy; 'tis not proper, at the moſt, to take away what they have too much of, the Follies that make them ridiculous: Comedy, by ſetting them in a clear Light, may give People a diſlike to them; on that Account the Stage is its proper Place, and likewiſe becauſe 'tis proportion'd to Man's Wit that loves Mirth, and readily tends to Trifles. Every Thing that is vain and frothy is fit to be repreſented on the Stage, and Comedy being the World in Epitome, Men that ſee it acted, value it ſufficiently by laughing at it. Were it rectified and clear'd of every Thing but Farce, and applied as much to Correction as it is to Amuſement, it might, at laſt, have its uſe, and be a Sport for People. But 'tis not ſo with Tragedy, it expoſes ſerious and grave Subjects on the Stage, and plays with Things from which we might draw quite another Advantage. It turns the Good into the Beautiful, after its Way, by making it ſerve for Repreſentations and Paintings, about which there's no other Queſtion but to know if they are well made: It expoſes and abaſes Virtue in ſome Reſpect, even by recommending it: We are not ignorant of the Price of Virtue, and we know very well it muſt be of uſe in the World. The Queſtion

is to know where to place it, and how Men are made, if any one can ſhew it to them as at a Diſtance, and out of the common Path of Life; if at any Rate he can give them a Diſpenſation from practiſing it themſelves, he pleaſes them. The Poets do them this Service by the help of Tragedies; there they ſet off Virtue with Splendour, but in ſo extraordinary a Sphere, and ſo diſtant from what is common and familiar, and they are ſo well acquainted with the Art of turning it into fine Words and lofty Sentiments, that they make a Kind of Proportion between the Play and Virtue. The Audience ſeeing it become a Theſis, the ſplendid Play-thing of Wit, accuſtom themſelves to look upon it as if it were made for that Purpoſe, and think that a Thing repreſented with ſo much Luſtre has all it can expect from human Wit. By approving and admiring theſe Compoſitions, and giving Way to all the Emotions which they produce, they are of Opinion they have anſwer'd every Thing they can require of them, with Regard to the Heart. Thus Virtue becomes a Shew exhibited to the Curioſity of the People, an Object for the Stage, whither Men baniſh her, and all theſe lofty Sentiments appear to them to be as far diſtant from common Life, as the Apparel and Attitudes of the Stage are from thoſe they wear at home. Love alone which, generally ſpeaking, is the eſſential Part of theſe Repreſentations, and in which all the Performances of the Stage center and aſſiſt each other, Love which is moſt ſuitable to the Inclinations of Youth, has its Effect in theſe Plays which were invented for them, and communicates itſelf in good earneſt. On this Account, eſpecially, it may be

ſaid

ſaid that Tragedy is miſchievous. It abaſes the Good by mixing it with the Bad, with Love, as it authorizes the Bad in making it go Hand in Hand with the Good. We ſhall therefore have Reaſon to look upon the greateſt Efforts of the Underſtanding for writing Tragedies among Things that are vain and ill-proportion'd, and thoſe for writing Comedies among ſuch as may be uſeful, were they as compleat as the Wit of Man, conducted by good Senſe, might make them; but as they are, they rather corrupt than do good.

The *French* have multiply'd and entirely abas'd Comedies, by a Kind of Writing which is altogether uncommon, that is Burleſque, to be found no where, I believe, but among them, and we muſt not forget to put the Poet, to whom they are obliged to for it, in the Liſt of their Wits. *Scaron*, a celebrated Author of this Age, has excell'd in this Way of Writing, and perfected it. Here all the Relations extend not only to the idle, but likewiſe to the extravagant Man, and this Wit deſerves to be acknowledged King of Extravagance, as well as *Voiture* King of Wantonneſs; the Number of his Admirers ſhews likewiſe that his Kingdom is as conſiderable. As to other Matters, it would ſeem as if Nature and this famous Wit had made War on one another reciprocally: Nature lodged it very ill, and in a deform'd Body, and it on the other hand, as if it were to revenge itſelf, disfigures *Virgil* who is the Poet that is an Honour to Nature; and he diſguiſes *Virgil* as Nature diſguiſed himſelf. This Work of Ridicule deſerv'd to be eſteem'd as much as it is, that Men might ſee how far we are capable of becoming the Bubbles of the Imagination, when we

we depart from good Senſe and Simplicity, and to what a Degree our Taſte is corrupted, when we think of cultivating it by any Thing elſe but Truth, which is agreeable to Man.

Another Author that appear'd on the Stage in the laſt Century, had already ſported himſelf with this deprav'd Taſte, in his *Pantagruel*, where by the Help of ſome fine Paſſages, which he ſeems to have thruſt into them here and there, as it were to allure the Reader, he makes him run over whole Pages, not only of Stuff, to which the Vulgar ſuffer themſelves to be eaſily led, but even of ſenſeleſs and mad Whimſies; that is, his Jeſts are accompany'd with Things that match them exactly; and he preſents to thoſe that run after this Kind of Wit, what their Taſte deſerves. Here we muſt not look for Relations; for the Pleaſure of this Wit was to deſtroy them, and to publiſh a Work where there were none, a Work inferior to Man's Condition, and which, by a myſterious Appearance, was thought to be above it. The *French* are, however, very proud of this Author, and they put him in the Rank of their (*m*) extraordinary Men. But ſome one has done him more Juſtice, in deriving the Name of *Rabelais*, from *Rabie Læſus*, that is, *Struck with Madneſs*; and it may be ſaid, that ſuch Numbers of People as uſe his Language and Jeſts, confirm this Etymology, and ſhew that they were bit, as it were, by ſome mad Thing or other. There's nothing in that Author, in my Opinion, to recommend Wit, and I believe other People will not much envy the *French* on the Score of theſe two extraordinary Perſons. We might likewiſe

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(*m*) *Vide* Rabelais *in* Morery's *Dictionary*.

bring ſome other Wits of the Time paſt on the Stage, and ſhew by them, that Wit, even when People excel in it in the Eyes of the Publick, has ſomething very ambiguous, and that a Nation, which had an Advantage of others in that Reſpect, would not have ſo much Reaſon to boaſt as is at firſt imagin'd. But let us quit the Wits of the Time paſt, to come to thoſe that make a ſhining Figure at this Time, or ſome of them at leaſt.

The firſt that offers is their celebrated Poet, the Author of the Satyrs, that ſweeps the *French Parnaſſus*, and drives away the Crowd of Wits that have no good Title to it. His Works are not without their Deſert, and they juſtify the Eſteem which the Publick has for them in ſome Meaſure. They are well turn'd and elegant, and have ſomething in them very aweful: There we ſee Art and Pains join'd to the Talents of Nature, and the Poet has happily introduced the fineſt Paſſages in the ancient Poets, and embelliſhed his own Works with them. Here the Relations extend to Man, inaſmuch as he is ſociable, and preſerves himſelf from Ridicule; and, generally ſpeaking, they are regular and well proportion'd, nor are the Works without Dignity. But the Price which the Poets ſets upon Good and Evil, eſpecially the firſt, ſeems to proceed rather from the Head than the Heart, anſwerable to his Satyrs, which affect the Head rather than the Heart. That is another Reaſon for not putting them into the firſt Rank, as to their Beauty, which is the Thing that gains them Applauſe. As to other Things, our Author has no predominant Character: He has good Senſe and Wit enough to excel ordinary Genius's; but I can't ſay he is a great

great Genius. He ſeems often to employ his good Senſe and his Wit ſeparately, and one of them when the other fails, rather than make uſe of both together, to ſet off to Advantage the Sentiments of the Heart, which make the Poet. He ſometimes raiſes himſelf, but his Flights are ſhort, and his Poems ſavour much of Straining and Pains; one may perceive that the Search of the Beautiful, and a particular Kind of Brightneſs are their chief Spring; from thence proceed the Jeſts which we meet ſo often in him, as well as all this unneceſſary Malice, and the Paſſages that divert the Reader, but are not to the Honour of the Poet. They make us ſenſible that the whole is no more than a Jeſt, that the Poet has no other View than to make himſelf merry, and to obtain the Approbation of the Publick, and a great Number of People that are pleas'd with this Malice and ill Nature. This likewiſe gave him an Opportunity of falling upon general Topicks, rather than the Defects of his Nation, and by this, as well as the proper Character of his Wit, he does not benefit the *French* as much as a Satyrick Poet might do. For this Reaſon chiefly, I look upon him to be as much beneath the Excellent, where he is placed by the Publick, as he is above the Ordinary or Indifferent, which he attacks with Succeſs in his Satyrs; and I am perſuaded Time, which ſets the juſt Value on Authors, will not put this in the firſt Rank, as the Age does. Give me Leave to make one Remark on the *French* Writers on this Poet's Account; generally ſpeaking, they write for the Publick, not to do them good, but to pleaſe them, and have their Approbation; they ſtudy their Taſte, and they will

not venture to write any Thing that may be diſagreeable to them. The Publick is their Idol, as Wit is the Publick's; and I believe one may ſay, without being miſtaken, that whatever Genius a Writer may have, this very mean View would be ſufficient to ſtint and hinder it from ſoaring, as it otherwiſe would. A Genius truly great has the Publick in his Eye, in order to give them Laws, and not to receive them; 'tis this that produces the Performances that are excellent.

The *French* have a Writer, that better deſerves, in my Opinion, the Title of a Wit. He gives an eaſy and ingenious Turn to whatever he writes in Proſe and in Verſe, and employs the Natural as well as the Brilliant. He knows Nature, and ſeldom departs from her in the Works where ſhe ought to be follow'd. Let the Subject he handles be never ſo dry, he embelliſhes it with fine Thoughts, and in him is ſeen, in all its Agreeableneſs, and, perhaps, in all its Profuſeneſs, the gay and elegant Wit, which is properly the Wit of the *French*. But his Works are defective (as well as a great many others) in that which ſhould be their Excellency; the Good, which the Heart alone, when 'tis repleniſh'd with it, ſpreads over them. The Author ſeems to keep himſelf neuter between the Good and the Evil which may be done to Men by writing, at leaſt, if it be true, that there's no Harm in entertaining them with Things that flatter the ordinary Taſte, to paint in lively Colours and moving Strokes, Love that miſleads them, and to make a Jeſt of ſeveral Subjects, which might be turn'd to better Advantage. The Relations are more natural in his Works than in thoſe of *Voiture* and *Saraſin*, and he

he may be put into the ſame Rank with them as to the Beauty of Wit, if he does not even ſurpaſs them; but theſe Relations are not leſs extended to the idle Man, that lives only for Pleaſure, and the Value of Things is not much better obſerv'd in them. For that Reaſon eſpecially, we can't ſet a very great one on his Works, be they never ſo well writ, and let them deſerve never ſo many Encomiums in other Reſpects. If it be true that Wit can't be carry'd further than this Author has done, as ſome imagine, that put him at the Head of the Moderns, that Work of his which has given room for this Opinion, ſhall likewiſe ſerve for a Proof that Wit, whatever Flights it may take, can't of itſelf go very far. He raiſes himſelf by the help of the Works of good Senſe, which others furniſh him with, and the Writers of this Character are in the right to take that Method; but we ſhall likewiſe be in the right to ſay, that if they will carry away the Bell from good Senſe, if Wit will have itſelf proclaimed King, he muſt be reduced to the Stratagem uſed by the Wren, that hid himſelf under the Eagle's Wing to be carry'd up to the Skies, and did not take his Flight, to overcome, till the Eagle had finiſh'd his.

Here we have a Wit of another Character, a famous Author, who after having writ on all Sorts of Subjects, with an extraordinary Facility, and gaining a great deal of Reputation, bethought himſelf, at laſt, to drain all his Knowledge, and diſcharge it into a large Book of Criticiſm, in order to entertain the Curious. This Author, above any other, demonſtrates how far a Man that is defective in the Sentiments of the Heart may go aſtray thro' Wit;

and his Work, which, by the agreeable Manner 'tis writ, deceives ſo many People, may ſhew on what Side the general Taſte of our Times is turn'd. The Relations of Things among themſelves are well obſerv'd here; Argument is this Author's Maſter-piece; but the Relations which Things have to Man are entirely overthrown and deſtroy'd. They neither reach the idle nor extravagant Man, but the vicious is made more vicious by them. The Author pleaſed himſelf with diſperſing Obſceneneſs thro' them, as well as jeſting on ſome Subjects, that every reaſonable Perſon will always reſpect, and he improves both the one and the other by Wit, that fits every Thing, the Filthy and the Bad, as well as the Good, and diverts himſelf with ſhewing the Wonders he can do in the Bad more than the Good. The Body of the Book is a Wonder of itſelf, for the many idle and impertinent Things which an agreeable Stile, and a natural and ingenious Turn makes us value and admire; 'tis the Work in the World where the Men that run after Wit, thoſe that have a mind to be amuſed and deceived, are beſt fitted. This frightful Volume, this Mountain of a Book, after making great Out-cries in a Preface that matches it exactly, and may excuſe a Man of Underſtanding from reading the Work, brings forth nothing more than a Mouſe, or rather the Mouſe brings forth a whole Brood, that creeps every where to gnaw and ſpoil, without even ſparing the moſt ſacred Things. Shall this Author, who thinks ſo ill of every Thing we eſteem, have Liberty of ſaying what he thinks, and ſhall others make it a Decorum not to ſay what they think of him? Let us ſpeak boldly, and ſay that the

Author

Author of the Critical Dictionary is a Quack, and, perhaps, the moſt remarkable of all the Quacks that ever appear'd; being deck'd with a vain-glorious Erudition, a Heap of Facts and Circumſtances that never deſerv'd to be taken Notice of by a Man of Senſe, he makes himſelf known by a Kind of Pomp, and attracts the Eyes of every one; and the Fertility of his Wit that makes him fit for acting any Part, puts him in a Condition of pleaſing a Crowd. Sometimes he acts the Philoſopher, that ſeems to have good Manners in great Eſteem, and he makes Reflections that recommend him; at other Times he is a Libertine that ſports with every Thing, and humours his Fancy. Sometimes he appears as a Free-Thinker, before whom nothing muſt ſtand; at other Times he oppoſes the Free-Thinkers themſelves, and you would be of Opinion he was going to fight them. He is a Scholar that cites or refutes other Scholars; he is a Cavalier that imitates the Language of the Court; ſometimes he affects that of War, at other Times that of the Bar. He often makes uſe of a Language that is only fit to charm the Mob with, and he ſpeaks it ſo well, that 'tis by it chiefly he carries the Bell from all the Quacks that went before him. There's no Part but he acts, nor any Figure but he aſſumes, to increaſe the Crowd of Spectators, as well as to pleaſe them; and the Fruit of all that is to make them look upon all Things as if they were made to be jeſted with. Some content themſelves with being bare Spectators of his apiſh Tricks, and loſe no more than their Time. Others, more to be lamented, give Credit to his Diſcourſes, and furniſh themſelves with his Drugs, as ſomething very extraordinary,

traordinary, that preſerves People from the Scruples and uneaſy Terrors of Religion, and they find, in Reality, what they ſeek after. 'Tis a Work that in every Shape is proper for ſeducing thoſe that will be ſeduced.

Here would be Matter in abundance for diſparaging that Kind of Wit call'd *Bel Eſprit*, ſhould we make it our Buſineſs to do ſo, and to the Authors I have quoted I might add others, which would conclude the Proofs I have already advanced; that Wit, when 'tis not conducted by good Senſe, is liable to all Sorts of Errors, and that even with its greateſt Efforts, ſuch Things as it produces fall ſhort of the Excellency they ſeem to have at firſt View; but 'tis better to conſider it in its true Uſe, when being guided by good Senſe, 'tis devoted with it to the Good of Society, by the Heart turned that Way, and filled with good Thoughts. Two Works of this Character have been much taken Notice of in our Days, and *France* furniſh'd us with them; Works that are excellent on Account of their Deſign, which is to inſtruct, and are embelliſh'd by the Delicacy of Wit, and agreeable Paſſages diffuſed thro' the whole. One of them makes a Kind of Parallel between the Characters of Men in former Times, drawn by one of the moſt celebrated Writers of Antiquity, and thoſe of the Men in our Generations. He makes at the ſame Time, by his Manner of Writing, a Parallel between the plain and unaffected Genius of Antiquity, or at leaſt of the Author he has tranſlated, and put at the Head of his Work, and the Genius of our Times, ſo fertile in Turns of Wit, that are natural to it, and he ſucceeds in it ſo far, that the Admirers of Antiquity muſt be under a Temptation

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to declare for the Genius of the Moderns, that is the witty. But the Work is valuable in this Reſpect, and it may be ſaid to be its Eſſential; that, generally ſpeaking, the Author ſeldom ſuffers the Reader to give any Attention to Wit, which he embelliſhes. There the Author makes it his chief Buſineſs to paint the Manners of his Nation, and ſeeks after ſuch Means as may enable him to be uſeful to it, and no doubt but he is ſo. We obſerve in his Writings, beſides the *French* Genius, which he poſſeſſes in its utmoſt Perfection, all the Penetration that a diſintereſted Man, or a Stranger, could add to them, and his lively and graceful Painting is undoubtedly as much to be valued for the Inſtruction they give us, and their Agreeableneſs, as the moſt ingenious Satyrs left us by Antiquity, and they far excel thoſe writ in our Times.

The other of theſe two Performances preſents to us in a Poetick Stile, as ſoft and harmonious, and as rich as the Poetry itſelf, the Sequel of one of the moſt celebrated Poems of Antiquity; and this Sequel or Fiction, ſo diſparaged by its being abuſed in our Days, appears again in its ancient Luſtre, is fill'd with important Inſtructions worthy of the Attention of the Perſons for whom it was chiefly writ; that is, thoſe that are appointed to govern, to whom People of Genius owe their Lucubrations preferably to all others. This Work is, perhaps, in our Times, the ſame Thing that thoſe of the *Greek* Poets were in the Times wherein they appear'd, that is, they excell'd all others. We may ſay ſomething like it of the Work we join with it, which does not yield to it in any Thing in its Kind; and in each

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of theſe Performances every Thing refers to Man in the Order and State he ought to be in, and tends to make him return to it. Theſe two Authors are not Wits; they are not of the Number of thoſe that make uſe of the Good, which they have only in their Heads, to embelliſh the Beautiful, or that which is intended to pleaſe, and which they have in their Hearts. They are Men of Wit that have the Good in their Hearts, and the Beautiful in their Heads. In them Wit does not devour the Man, it only adorns him, and mixes the Beautiful with the Good, which is their chief Aim, as well as the eſſential Part of their Works. The Character of a good Man that touches us ſenſibly in every Thing he writes, affects the Reader more than all the Beautiful or the Good in the Work itſelf, or rather this Character makes the true Beauty, which is the ſame Thing to Compoſitions of Wit, that a good Countenance is to ſome People, it pre-engages us in their Favour, and puts us into the propereſt Diſpoſition of being eaſily perſuaded.

To theſe two Performances let us add a third: The agreeable *Fablers* in the witty Poetry of another fine Genius, an Original Genius, and, perhaps, the only one of his Kind. This Work which gives delight even to the moſt ſerious Perſons, that have but very little Value for any Thing that has no more to recommend it than the Agreeable, ſhews us what one of thoſe we have juſt mention'd has already taught us in ſome Reſpect; that every Man that has only Wit for his Share, would do well to borrow ſomething of thoſe that have good Senſe for theirs, in order to improve his Wit; and that in whatever Manner he poſſeſſes it, he ought

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to conſecrate it to the Rational, to the Good that deſerves to be embelliſh'd, and by that Method, if its Value is not increas'd, it comes at leaſt into Vogue. Wit, by keeping cloſe to the Good, participates of its Dignity, it raiſes itſelf and ſhines much more than when it makes itſelf known and adorns itſelf, which is ſeldom obſerved in any Works but ſuch as are of no Value. This Author may likewiſe ſhew us what Wit is capable of when it forſakes the Good. He has ſully'd his Talent and tarniſh'd his Reputation by a Work far different from that we have mentioned: There the Agreeable is employed to give Currency to the Bad and the Foul, and makes ſome Perſons reliſh them, that would otherwiſe diſdain them. Were it not for the firſt Work, the ſecond would be leſs miſchievous, and this Conjunction ſhews us that in order to be a uſeful Writer to Society, and deſerve the Praiſes due to Men that diſtinguiſh themſelves, 'tis not enough to have extraordinary Talents, that may be of great uſe; nor will it ſuffice to employ them in ſuch a Manner as that Good may reſult from them; he muſt have Good in his Eye, and devote his Talents to it; and a Heart full of that in which the Merit of Man conſiſts, muſt determine his Underſtanding to one and the ſame End, the only one that is worthy of him; otherwiſe a Work may deſerve all Sorts of Praiſes, without the Author's having any Share in them. The extraordinary Regret which the Author we ſpeak of was under, as they ſay, towards the End of his Days, for the Work which gives occaſion to theſe Reflections, demonſtrates that Wit miſleads the very Perſons that have Virtue and Sincerity; but have no great Value

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for them, becauſe they value Wit too much, by which they acquire a more general, or at leaſt a quicker Reputation.

Shall not we put the Book of Moral Reflections among the celebrated Productions of Wit? If it be true that Wit is good Senſe refin'd, this will, no doubt, be a Work of Wit, and even the firſt in its Kind. But as it is all natural and plain without any brilliant, good Senſe may reclaim it and boaſt of it, and in that Caſe, it would be a Maſter-piece of good Senſe. 'Tis ſo without doubt, and it may prove what I ſaid in the Beginning of my Letter: That good Senſe, without any Ornament, when it appears in its full Force, has the Advantage of Works where there's a Mixture of Wit; that the Good has its proper Beauty, which is ſufficient for it. This Book of Reflections ought to be plac'd among the Works of the firſt Rank, as well on Account of the Deſign, as the Manner of executing it. It ſets a Value on Things that Men ought to be acquainted with, but are not, on every Thing they do in the whole Courſe of their Lives; and by a gentle Violence, if I may uſe the Expreſſion, it forces their pretended Riches from them, their imaginary Virtues with which they are content, and which hinders them from acquiring ſuch as are real. Here likewiſe every Thing is made relative to Man, who is unmaſk'd by this Work, and compell'd to know his own corrupt Nature. The falſe Relations, on which his Corruption is founded, are there overthrown, and by that, Man is excited to ſearch for true Relations, and incline to Religion, which comprehends them all. Theſe Reflections lead him inſenſibly to ſee the Neceſſity of it, and by giving him ſound Ideas of Man's

Man's Condition, they teach him how he ſhall not be eaſily miſtaken in the Things that ought to correct it. He ſees that Religion does not increaſe theſe Appearances, nor render Man what he would really ſeem to be. All the ingenious or rational Productions of Men ſhould be byaſs'd in ſome Meaſure to a like End, as 'tis not impoſſible but all the Productions of Nature have a ſecret Tendency the ſame Way, and are made to lead us to it. Wit, as well as good Senſe, is given to Man for his Good, and Man's Good conſiſting in Religion, Wit and good Senſe cannot avoid regarding it, when they are apply'd as they ſhould be. They ought to ſet us forward, ſo far, at leaſt, as to ſhew us the Value of every Thing that offers. But I muſt not leave this Subject without making ſome other Remarks that have a Relation to it, and I muſt ſay ſomething to you of a particular Sort of Authors, little known in other Nations, but are an Honour to this.

The Women in *France* have obſerv'd that Wit belong'd to them, as much as to the Men, and have enter'd the Liſts with them upon it. There are no leſs than ten or twelve Writers among them, that have ſucceeded ſo well, both in Proſe and in Verſe, as to carry the Prize from moſt Men, and to preſerve the Rights of their Sex to *Parnaſſus*; which is as much as to ſay, that in this Country, the Publick ought not to be ſurpriz'd at Female Authors, which are diſlik'd in the World thro' Prejudice, with Regard to their Capacity. It muſt be own'd, indeed, that *Parnaſſus* is not inhabited by Men, but by Maids, and I confeſs, were I to regulate any Thing in that Country, it would be in Favour of their Sex. 'Tis true, the Character of an Author does not

not ſeem to agree with them entirely, and 'tis not without ſome Reaſon, that we have hitherto ſeen but few Women Writers; but ſince the *Bagatelle* is made the Subject of Books, and even allowing that Women had no Genius for that I ſpeak of, they may, however, become Authors, and preſent the Publick with the *Je ne ſçai quoi*, which next follows the *Bagatelle*, and is not to be found, I believe, but in *France*. They ſay, one ſhould write as he ſpeaks, and the Women are already in Poſſeſſion of Wit for Converſation, as well as the Men; 'tis properly among them the *Bagatelle* diſplays itſelf, and adorns the Perſons that know how to make uſe of it. They have therefore Reaſon to write, and the Men ought not only to join with them for Wit, but even yield it to them. They have poſſeſs'd themſelves of the Government, and have Force and Authority in their Hands; they ought gallantly to leave Agreeableneſs and Finery to the Women, whatever thoſe Things may be. The Women would become more accompliſh'd by them, and the Men, in their Commerce with them, would be the more happy, ſince after all, the Women bring the Men whatever they have that is aimiable; and 'tis certain, the Women would not ſhew their bright Parts were it not to pleaſe them, as they are not beautiful but for them. So that in Conformity to the Reflections I have made in the Beginning of my Letter, and proteſting againſt all Abuſe, in Caſe they ſhould not make uſe of this Advantage with Diſcretion, I would adjudge to their Sex, the Beautiful, the Agreeable and the Nice in Matters of Wit, as they have them already in Things that relate to the Body; I would join theſe two Things as being made to be together, and which we have

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no Reaſon to ſeparate, and I would improve Nature itſelf in their Favour. 'Tis certain, that this Sex, when they preſerve the Agreeableneſs that is proper for them, and don't mix any Thing that is foreign to it, have more Delicacy of Wit than Men. It becomes a Woman better to ſay pretty Things than it does a Man, as Beauty is more becoming in Women than Men; they ſpeak with more Softneſs and Baſhfulneſs, and conſequently with a better Grace, and every Thing, even to the Tone of their Voice, is ſuitable to what they ſpeak, and adds new Ornaments. A Man ought to ſpeak rationally, and with Dignity, anſwerable to his Height, and a majeſtick Air which become him, and 'tis in them he ought to take Pleaſure. But the Truth on't is, Men, generally ſpeaking, are not ſatisfy'd with thoſe Things, and there are but few that have Reaſon enough to be above the Beautiful and the Nice, eſpecially the *French*. Their Politeneſs and other Things enervate the Underſtanding, and beſides the Women Authors, they have Authors that have the Weakneſs of Women in great Numbers. I muſt ſay ſomething of them.

The Wits of this Kind make their principal Merit conſiſt in a fine Stile, the Purity of Diction and the Manner of Writing according to the Mode. The Stile independant of what is expreſs'd, is an Affair of Importance in *France*, and valued at a high Rate. There's no doubt but with moſt Readers, a Book writ in a fine Stile, tho' otherways trifling, will be read much more than another that may be very inſtructive, and even witty, but writ in a bad Stile. 'Tis true the Thing has not come to paſs that I know of; but if it ſhould, I am perſuaded there would be a great Conſternation in the *French Parnaſſus*, and

and that all the Muſes would be frighten'd at ſuch an unlucky Event. For the Maids of the *Holy Hill* are like all the reſt in this Reſpect, that they don't love to appear in a bad Equipage, and often take ſo much Pleaſure in adorning themſelves, that they don't know one another, and inſpire the Wit of Dreſs inſtead of that of Thoughts and Sentiments. The Crowd of Readers does on their Part what the People are us'd to do, when they ſee a great deal of Finery: They amuſe themſelves with the Shew which dazzles them, and take no Notice of any Thing elſe. It may, perhaps, be true that there's ſome Deſign in this Kind of Writing, and that the Writers, to honour the *French* Language, for which they have here an extraordinary Veneration, try whether there may not be a Way of improving it, independant of Thoughts, in the room of which they place Turns and Harmony, and likewiſe figurative Ways of Speaking, whereof there are thouſands in the *French* Language, which are as ſo many Thoughts annex'd to it, and adorn it. There's ſomething more real than this Harmony, and the figurative Ways of Speaking, that is your Romances and Novels, which are almoſt as numerous in *France* as thoſe Ways of Speaking. They are Realities among Nothings, and their uſe is to make Men go from Nothing to the Bad, to which the other ſerves for an Introduction. The fine Stile join'd to the Approbation of the Publick, which Writers look upon as the chief End of every Work, are the two Things that make bad Writers ſo numerous in *France*; and leſſen the Merit of the good ones; of ſuch, at leaſt, that have not the Courage to ſet themſelves above ſuch Things

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as theſe, as much as is neceſſary. We ought either not to write, or write Things that are ſuperior to Stile; and an Author ought to be by his Character, as well as by his Works, above the Crowd, which are the main Part of the Publick.

After theſe Wits we muſt place thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves on all Sorts of little Subjects, and are an Honour to their Nation by their Numbers, as well as by the Brillant they entertain us with. By this, the Nation, as much as by their Women Authors, has the Advantage of every other Nation, and in my Opinion, of all other Nations together. If thoſe other Wits make *France* the Country of Encomiums and Panegyricks, of Comedies and Operas, of Romances and Novels; theſe here make it the Country of Songs; Drinking-Songs and Dancing-Songs; Satyrick and Love-Songs; Obſcene and Impious-Songs; and laſtly, the Country of Ballads; which give the Vulgar an Opportunity of partaking of the Pleaſures of the polite People, and make the Songs be heard aloud in the Streets, in the Towns and the High-ways in the Country. This Fertility of Wit fills *France* with Stanzaes and Sonnets, Fables and Stories, Deſcriptions and New-Year's-Gifts, Parodies and Rhimes, Roundoes and Ballads, Paſtorals and Eclogues, Madrigals and Epigrams, Riddles and Epitaphs, Odes, Epiſtles and Elegies; and every Man of Gallantry is compell'd to write ſomething: 'Tis like a Capitation which the Faſhion levies of theſe People; and there are ſome, who finding themſelves incapable of furniſhing any Thing to this Fund of Poetry, apply themſelves to their Friends, who pay for them. To their Copiouſneſs, we muſt add their ready Wit, or

Wit at a Pinch, whereof we ſee Eſſays from Time to Time, which do moſt Honour to thoſe who ſucceed in them. But theſe Eſſays have not been very fortunate hitherto; and all theſe Sports of Wit, as well as theſe others that are more celebrated, which have their Theatre, are Sports for the People for whom they are provided, much more than for thoſe who contrive them, and divert themſelves by writing them. The ready Wit falls to the Share of People that ſhine in Converſation, who are likewiſe poſſeſs'd of Jeſts, Sallies of Wit, Puns, obliging Expreſſions, Drollery and agreeable Ralleries, ſmart Rapertees, Equivocation and playing with Words, Proverbs, merry Stories, pretty Expreſſions, faſhionable Ways of Speaking, and other Advantages which, if they don't confer Titles, attract, at leaſt, Encomiums to thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves that Way, and are diſtinguiſh'd from the Vulgar, that can't ſpeak any thing but what is natural. Would not you be of Opinion, Sir, that the *French* ought to be left in Poſſeſſion of theſe Advantages which Nature has given them, and by which they accompliſh themſelves by ſtudying to cultivate them, and to content ourſelves with the Character of plain good Senſe, without any Ornament, which ſhe gives us, and to aſſociate ourſelves in this Reſpect with the People, with whom they range us?

I embrace you, SIR, &c.

I am highly pleas'd with this

J. B.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Of TRAVELLING.

YOU have ſeen me, Sir, return'd from my Travels; and you have rejoic'd with me upon that Occaſion. I now offer you a freſh Subject of rejoicing, in acquainting you with my preſent Condition, and the agreeable Life I lead in the Country, on the Eſtate which I have inherited, and which the Remembrance of my preceding Travels renders compleatly delicious. If Travelling ought to redound any way conſiderably to our Advantage, and if Reſt, as being ſweet, ought to ſucceed Labour, 'tis in the Country that we may hope for thoſe Advantages: The Life one leads in a City is too full of Hurry; we paſs it in ſtroling from Houſe to Houſe, from one Company to another, to which we lie unavoidably expos'd by thoſe by whom we are ſurrounded on every Side: This is no other than Travelling. In my Opinion, the Country alone fixes us in our natural Situation: It places us, agreeably, in the Mid-Way between Retirement and Society, as well as between Repoſe and Labour, which we, there, may cauſe to ſucceed each other, even juſt as we pleaſe: It

withdraws us from all Manner of Dependance, and ſets us at Liberty; without which we cannot poſſibly be happy. Here we meet with By-Paths, which furniſh us with Means to ſhun the Crowd, and to paſs away Life with Pleaſure. Cuſtom, the Scourge of Men of Senſe, and which, in Cities, reigns with an arbitrary Sway, here, ſcarce maintains Authority enough to be even ſo much as taken Notice of; and Opinion, upon which one depends when once we have any Regard to Cuſtom, in like Manner ceaſes to torment us. The Happineſs we ſeek for, tho' without knowing in what it conſiſts, and for which we, therefore, ſeek in vain, here makes itſelf known, and offers itſelf to us. Here, our Manners are ſoften'd, our Paſſions grow calm, our Schemes and Deſigns diminiſh, and our whole Race of Life becomes quiet and ſedate; or, at leaſt, the Country is the Place where all that may the moſt eaſily be attain'd, and where, naturally, the Inclination for thoſe Things ſhould be form'd: And, undoubtedly, this is the Place of Proſpect, from whence one ought to take a View of the World, in order to be acquainted with it, and to make ones Choice. A ſmall Term of Retirement, and the Reflections it produces, do perfectly well after ſome Years Travelling, and diſpoſe one to put all to the Uſe to which it ought to have been deſign'd. Nay, I can't help fancying, that it is here, in the retir'd Life one enjoys in the Country, that we actually form ourſelves for Society. It is where we become calm and eaſy, and where we attain to the Knowledge of our ownſelves: It is the Means of returning to an orderly, regular Courſe of Life, if we have any Inclination that way; and it is certain, that

that no irregular, diſorderly Perſon can ever be truly ſociable: Who can be orderly with others, if not ſo with himſelf? In chuſing, therefore, this Kind of Life, I have not, as you ſeem to tax me, withdrawn myſelf from Society; on the contrary, as I drew nearer to my native Country, in quitting foreign Parts, in order to repatriate, I now once more approach it, in ſtripping myſelf of all that ſmells outlandiſh, and which prevents my being a Man, to acquit myſelf of that which I owe to others, as well as to myſelf. Thoſe who think of enjoying Life, will find, in the End, that the Country affords all the Advantages tending thereto, and to the putting it to a right Uſe: It is our primitive Station, and the Sentiments I have of it are Tokens of its being ſo: It is where I, for my Part, deſire to live and die.

But, it is my Opinion, that I am come late, and that I ought to haſten myſelf to reap ſome Benefit. Half my Life ſeems to be near elaps'd, at leaſt half of that Part of it which deſerves that Name; and Time, which is precious throughout the whole Courſe of Life, ſhould by me be eſteem'd at a double Price. I ought, for the future, to manage it as one does the Remainder of ones Subſtance, when moſt of it is conſum'd; and, in Effect, this is the Subject of my preſent Œconomy. Multiplicity of Acquaintance, unneceſſary Viſits, the reading of all Sorts of Books, or indeed much of any Kind of Reading, any agreeable Correſpondences by Letters, or the like; theſe are the great Expences which I avoid. It is not ſo eaſy for me to give an Account of the Profits, or of the good Uſes I put my Time to; and, perhaps, I am like thoſe young, raw Œconomiſts, who for

Fear of miſplacing their Money, do nothing at all with it. Nevertheleſs, it is true, that I have my Views; that is, I propoſe to live, to reap Advantage from myſelf, as well as from Time, and to enjoy what I have of my own; to know Man in endeavouring to attain the Knowledge of myſelf: For, in Reality, it is ſomewhat unaccountable, that Man, who loves himſelf above every Thing elſe in the World, ſhould be deſirous of knowing every Thing elſe before he knows himſelf, and that Quiet and Tranquillity, from whence that Knowledge is alone extracted, ſhould be Happineſſes ſo long unknown to him. Generally ſpeaking, he never attains it till he has run thro' an Infinity of Toil and Fatigue; and happy for him if ever they bring him to it: My Sentiment, from hence forwards, will be, that as War ought not to be wag'd but with a View of obtaining and enjoying Peace, and to re-eſtabliſh that Peace upon a firmer Foundation, ſo none ſhould undertake to travel but in order, at length, to live peaceably at home, and enjoy his Eaſe unmoleſted. If all People arriv'd at that Happineſs, by Means of their Peregrinations, it might, indeed, be ſaid, that Fortune, whom ſo many Travellers hunt for without ever meeting with her, waits for them at their Return, and that, with this Proſpect, every one ought to make all poſſible Haſte to ſet out: As for the other Profits one reaps from Travelling, they ſeem, in my Eye, to be very inconſiderable. I ſometimes conſider them, making ſerious Reflections upon Travels; and you can't imagine how very needleſs and unprofitable I look upon the greateſt Part of them to be, and how far I am from attempting to juſtify thoſe Tours I have been taking. Every

Voyage,

Voyage, or Journey taken merely for Cuſtom-ſake, I look upon as no good Undertaking, and think all the Time ſpent therein loſt and miſ-employ'd. 'Tis upon this very Head that I am going to tell you my Thoughts; and I wiſh I could communicate them to all the World: Nor ſhould I believe that I had travell'd to no Purpoſe, provided that, in painting out the Abuſe of Travelling, I could but prevent any one from throwing away his Time in rambling Abroad.

I take it to be with Travelling as it is with the greateſt Part of Cuſtoms, which, originally, were found to be wholeſome and well intended, but which grew to Abuſes and Nuiſances, when they ſubſiſted longer than the Cauſes to which they ow'd their Riſe. Some great and diſcerning Men took it into their Heads to travel, with the View of ſearching, among the politer and better regulated Nations, for Laws and Inſtitutions, which were wanting in their own, or of acquiring the Knowledge of ſuch Things wherein they were themſelves deficient. Theſe were either Legiſlators, or Philoſophers, who imagin'd they could not, by any other Means, attain to the Accompliſhment of their Deſigns. Their Compatriots moſt gladly depended on their Care in the Execution of thoſe Commiſſions; and content with being themſelves Sharers in the Gain, voted Honours to thoſe Perſons who had been the Projectors of what redounded ſo much to their Benefit and Advantage. I conjecture, that, after this, an Itch of being ſo honour'd and eſteem'd, Curioſity, a reſtleſs Diſpoſition, with other ſuch like Motives, induc'd others likewiſe to betake themſelves to ramble; this brought on bartering of Commodities; which,

accordingly as it increas'd, and grew more and more extenſive, occaſion'd Travelling to become more in Uſe, and eaſier to be undertaken and perform'd. By little and little, and more eſpecially by Imitation, the Number of Travellers ſwell'd; and the Incapacity of Parents to breed up their Sons, which oblig'd them to have Recourſe to this Expedient, has, at length, brought Travelling to be a very common Thing; a Cuſtom; which is what diſpenſes People from giving Reaſons for what they do, and which, thereby, is become the ſtrongeſt and moſt efficacious of all Reaſons. This Cuſtom, whereby Travelling is authoriz'd, and as it were eſtabliſh'd, is by ſo much the more pernicious, as the People we viſit in our Travels, the polite People, whoſe Cuſtoms and Manners of Living are preſcrib'd as Models, are the moſt corrupt; at leaſt in ſome certain particular Reſpects; ſo that, conſequently, there is more to be loſt than won among them. So it was, that the *Romans* diſſipated their Remnant of Virtue among the *Greeks*; that, in the laſt Centuries, People were corrupted by travelling into *Italy*; and that, in theſe our Days, Travellers reſort to *France* in ſearch of falſe Merit; a Merit which harbours Corruption by throwing a Veil over it.

Divers Reaſons are found out in the Vindication of Travelling, in order to ſtop the Mouths of ſuch as are not ſatisfy'd barely with its being authoriz'd by Cuſtom; and the chief of thoſe Reaſons are reduc'd to the Alterations and Improvements it muſt of neceſſity work on the Characters of young People. Their Character is, generally ſpeaking, vicious; a Removal or an Amendment of this is what is aim'd at:

'Tis

'Tis hop'd, that by giving them the Opportunity of ſeeing better Examples, they will modellize thereupon, and change their Diſpoſitions; nay, this Change is depended on as already come. But I would willingly aſk, In what conſiſt the Changes that are expected from Man, and which are look'd on as depending on himſelf? I profeſs, that I cannot allow them ſuch a Length as to deſerve that he ſhould travel for them; neither do I believe them to be of a Nature to be obtain'd by that Method. It ſeems to me, that, moſt commonly, this is no other than the Paſſage from one of the Periods of Life to the other, and not in the leaſt a Paſſage from a bad Character to a good one; and that it is no Manner of Change in Man's Eſſential. It may very well be of Man as of Fruits: They have their Seaſons; are green, they grow ripe, and they corrupt; as to the reſt, the good are good, and the bad are bad; all this by Nature. Some Improvement, indeed, they may receive by a convenient Soil, Situation, *&c.* their Colour and Taſte may be thereby ſomewhat improv'd; yet all that does not go ſo far as to alter their Kind, or to make good what is naturally otherwiſe. And if even this could be brought to bear, I cannot ſtill think, that Travelling can ever work the ſame Effect upon Men as Culture does upon Vegetables, or that it can be ſo really beneficial to Youth as the Education that may be given them at home; at leaſt Experience, to which its Champions have Recourſe to prove it, does not prove it at all. We have, here, very lately, ſeen a Perſon return from his Travels, and People full of their Exclamaons upon the wonderful Transformation wrought in him; when there was none in the leaſt but what

what Time would, of neceſſity, have brought on: This was a tardy Fruit, then come to its Maturity, and which in its own native Soil would have ripen'd full as ſoon. It is my Opinion, that all the Changes which are remark'd in young People are of the very ſame Nature; they are to come; and if they happen to appear in a Traveller, it is only becauſe Travelling was no more capable of preventing than it was of producing them. Travels are perform'd, commonly, in an Age wherein the Periods which, in Life, ſucceſſively form themſelves are extremely ſenſible; they continue long enough to give Room for one of thoſe Periods to form itſelf, and ordinarily reach that Period which conveys us beyond our Puerility, or our fiery juvenile Years, to the Age of Reaſon. Young Travellers, therefore, muſt needs return home in ſome Meaſure chang'd: But this Change would, doubtleſs, have been brought about with more Facility, and would have extended farther, was there, in Travelling, an Opportunity of enjoying that ſedate and retir'd Sort of Life, which is requiſite towards the producing both that, and every Thing which may benefit Mankind. This Sort of Life it is that we ought rather to ſeek, nay even to ſearch for it in remote Places, in caſe we cannot obtain it at home: There, in finding ourſelves, we ſhould attain to all that is neceſſary for us to find, and we ſhould give Room for very conſiderable Changes, if in us ſuch were wanting. Out of that, and in the perpetual Hurry and Agitation in which we live, we only paſs through all Sorts of inconſiderable Changes, or aſſume all Kinds of Shapes, merely to continue the ſame we are, to repair, by the Diverſity thereof, the Inſufficiency that there

there may be in our Character. In a Word, whether we do not change at all, or if we do change to the Point towards which we ought to incline; if from bad and vicious, as we once were, we turn about and become good and virtuous, acquire a true Way of thinking, and a Rectitude of Judgment which we had not before, I am very positively persuaded, that we ought to attribute all to Causes of far greater Efficacy, than are either Travelling, or any of the common Methods practis'd by us, in order to produce those Effects.

And how shall we be capable of changing ourselves, and determining upon the Methods which are to produce this Change, since we do not, as yet, rightly know what it is that we ought to be, what it is to be a Man? Have we attain'd any clear and certain Idea of that Particular, as we have of Things of less Moment? For Example, as we have of those Brute Creatures, which are created for the Use of Man. None are ignorant that the Horse is made for Burden, and the Ox to bear the Yoke; that the Cow, *&c.* give Milk, and the Sheep Wool; and that this is the Nature, the Essential of those Animals. Neither is any one more put to it in regard to what is believ'd to be the Essential of the several different Stations of Life a Man may enter into; as a Magistrate, a Commander, a Merchant, an Artizan, or the like; and very ready and very particular Answers are made to Questions started upon that Subject. But they will not so readily and precisely tell one in what consists (the Essential of Man; of Man in himself,) independent of these different Stations and Conditions: On this Point Men do not agree; and have only confus'd and rambling

Ideas

Ideas which afford little or no Satisfaction. It is certain, that Man is a Creature consummately excellent; but little known; as little to himself as he is to others: And there is no small Appearance, that it is Order alone, when he re-enters into it, that can remove the Veil from before his Eyes. It imports him to carry within his ownself both his Occupation and his Dignity, and not to find himself reduc'd to be made this or that, in order to employ, improve, or advance himself: Nay, he ought even to be above all Stations whatever, in which he may happen to be plac'd, how eminent soever they may be; and by so much the rather, as all those Stations and Conditions of Life have in View nothing but the Re-establishment of Humanity. But since Man has lost his Occupation, his Dignity, the Knowledge of that which regards him is likewise lost, and in the Disorder we are in, we are ignorant even of what our Occupation and our Dignity consists in. As it is Order alone that can bring us to this Knowledge, I believe, that there is but one only Method to re-enter into Order; this is to follow the Instinct existing within us; the natural Instinct, which is, perhaps, all we have of the primitive State of Man, and which is left us to re-conduct us to it. All the living Beings, we know of, have theirs, which does not deceive them: Must not Man, who is the most excellent of all these Beings, have his Instinct; such an Instinct as extends itself throughout his whole Character, and as is no less infallible than extensive? Undoubtedly he has it; and this Instinct is the Conscience, wherein the Deity makes himself known to us, and converses with us. By not pursuing this Instinct, which, above all

all Things, we ought to cultivate, both in ourſelves and in our Children, it is that we have not the Knowledge of what Man is; and, for Want of this Knowledge, we are in an Uncertainty as to what regards the Education of Youth, and are at a Loſs how to employ them, to prevent their falling into thoſe Exceſſes to which Inaction and their immature Years naturally incline them.

Such Parents as are not themſelves in a State of Humanity, and are, barely, fix'd in Stations thereunto relating, have, for their Off-ſpring, nothing in View except thoſe very Stations and Conditions of Life, and, with thoſe very ſame Motives, devote and dedicate them to the ſame, Humanity, conſider'd in itſelf, not having the leaſt Share in their Procedure, nor, in the leaſt, inſpiring them with a Knowledge of the Principles or Fundamentals which make a Man. From thence it comes to paſs, that they find themſelves at a Loſs at the Juncture when their Sons ſhou'd give Inſtances of their being Men, it plainly appearing that they are not ſo, juſt at the Time when they have attain'd the Age of Reaſon, without, as yet, having wherewithal to hide that Want of Humanity, which is viſible in them, and which the ſeveral States of Life, to which they are deſtin'd, in ſome Meaſure, help to conceal. The Parents then, not knowing what better Courſe to take, abandon them to themſelves, and to Chance, to which the Education they give them naturally reduces them: They ſend them abroad to travel; that is to ſay, to acquire a Merit, of which they have a confus'd and indeterminate Idea, and with which Travelling (confus'd and indeterminate itſelf as it is) muſt needs furniſh them.

Travelling

Travelling perfectly well proves our Ignorance and the Loſs of Humanity, which we ramble the World to ſearch, without knowing what we ſeek for, and which we flatter ourſelves to have found, according to the exterior Appearance of what we meet with, and accordingly as it flatters our Imagination.

One of the principal Advantages of this Nature regards the Mind. In Youth, it ſeems, it muſt be form'd by Travelling; and it is one of the chief Motives that ſends them Abroad. In Effect, it is upon the Mind, by affording it inceſſant Opportunities of Improvement, that Travelling ſhould chiefly operate. But this Occupation, beſides its accuſtoming us to value ourſelves upon what we term Wit, and therein to center our whole Merit, which is far from a good Character, we form this Wit upon no other Model than the general one, which is not the beſt Method. It caſts us into Imitation, which never produces any thing grand or noble: It cauſes us to conſider a Turn of Wit (as it is call'd) as a Matter of mighty Importance, and occaſions our aſſuming what is none of our own, and which is neither convenient for, nor belongs to us. It forms a Mind more to Deciſion than to Reflection, or Diſcernment, and renders it rather bold than juſt. Beſides, in ſubjecting ones Mind to a certain Point, and in accuſtoming it to conſider what is preſented to it only after a certain receiv'd and faſhionable Manner, we confine and limit it while it is in its Production, and divert it both from what it might produce new of itſelf, and in which its true Beauty conſiſts, and from the Liberty of Thought, its real Vigour. But why are we to be ſo much concern'd about the Formation of

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our Wit? It is not unlikely, that the Interior, all one as the Exterior, of Man may be of a Nature to form and diſplay itſelf, without requiring any farther Aſſiſtance than that of Truth and Reality, together with the Converſation of ſome Perſons of Senſe and Judgment, in order to corroborate it, and to inure it to execute its Functions. Nothing is requir'd but what is eaſily to be obtain'd, and what every one meets with in his own Country. In a Word, one needs not be reduc'd to go very far to ſeek for what is neceſſary for us: That ſeems natural to ſo noble a Creature as Man, and even to every Creature; and the Aſſiſtance of the other Countries, which we viſit in our Travels, has I know not what of ſomething in it foreign to a Man, and that even ſavours of Impertinence. True it is, that the Mind, when it abandons and delivers up itſelf to its own Strength, may, according to the common Idea, harbour ſomething in it monſtrous and deform'd; but in this State it is original: It ſoars, it aſpires, and dares conſider and look at all Things as they actually are in their Nature: It places itſelf above Expreſſions and Turns which confine it, as well as above Precedents and Prejudices which ſtop its Career, and is in a State of following Truth, whitherſoever ſhe conducts it. This is, doubtleſs, the Aim of Nature, who places not in the Character of Wit, the Reaſon which ſhe gives to Men, ſo much Diverſity to the End that they ſhould diſfigure it by imitating one another; but with a View of diſplaying her Store, and of giving Man Room to manifeſt the Wonders of Humanity. All this not only does not oblige us to travel, but it may be from hence gather'd that,

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in what Manner ſoever it may be, it is an Abuſe to think of faſhioning the Mind alone, independant of Truth, and of therein making to conſiſt the principal Article of the Education we beſtow upon our Youth. It is their Hearts which we ought to endeavour to frame and regulate, by inculcating to them the Principles of Juſtice and Probity, without having ſo deep a Concern for the reſt, which will follow readily enough of itſelf: The Qualities of the Heart excuſe us from the flaſhy Ornaments of the Mind, and ſufficiently embelliſh us, or they rectify and bring to Perfection the others; and after all, it is only the Man who abounds in laudable Qualities that the Embelliſhments of the Mind would become, as it is only Meadows and Gardens that are adorn'd with Flowers. Man, in his Corruption, is an uncultivated Land: To go about to faſhion his Mind in that State, would be planting Flowers in a Thicket of Brambles, which all the Flowers in the World would never render agreeable. But if that Ground is clear'd, and has the Care and Pains it requires beſtow'd upon it, it will of itſelf become beautiful, by producing divers Sorts of Herbs, each of which will have its reſpective Flower and Virtue.

Another great Benefit, which is pretended to accrue from Travelling is, the Knowledge of the World. By ſeeing Men, and reading the great Book of the Univerſe, ſay thoſe Champions, one cannot avoid attaining that Knowledge: In this they are ſomewhat in the Right. If by the Knowledge of the World, is underſtood the Manner of People's living in the World, it is, indeed, by Travelling, having a View of the different Scenes, and the various Perſonages which

which the World preſents to our Sight, that we may acquire the Knowledge of it. But there is, in Reality, nothing in all that which can afford any very great Satisfaction, ſince we thereby only become acquainted with Manners, Cuſtoms and outward Decorums which enter little into the Character of a Man. All theſe Matters, even if they could be juſt as we would wiſh them to be, do not conclude any thing in Favour of him who poſſeſſes them, ſince they are liable to be aſſum'd by a Knave, an Impoſtor, if it is his Intereſt ſo to do: Nay, and it is very poſſible, that an honeſt Man, ſuch a Man in Reality as even the moſt beautiful Appearances might induce us to imagine him to be, may neglect them. This Knowledge is the very ſame that is to be met with throughout the World, and tends only towards rendering us like to that Appearance, and to ſet a great Value upon what we, by thoſe Means, are not perfectly acquainted with, but obſerve it to be eſteem'd by others, whom we ſuppoſe to be ſenſible of its Worth, and to ſee therein Things impenetrable to our Opticks. Much better would it be for us to be acquainted with the Man, than with his Maſk; with the Springs which ſet him at Work, talking and acting, than with his Exterior, and the Droll he is playing. This Knowledge, indeed, not only guides us to that of ourſelves, to which all true Knowledge of Man ought to bear ſome Reference, but it may be, likewiſe, of Uſe, in furniſhing us with Occaſions of ſetting a Price upon Appearances, which may, otherwiſe, deceive us, and, in Concluſion, to put us out of Conceit with a Kind of Life made up of nothing but falſe Colours. The true Knowledge

of the World is that of Mankind its Inhabitants, that of the Bottom of their Character, and of the Advantage that may be drawn from thence: It makes us diſcover Things directly oppoſite to the Appearances which attract us, and it muſt of neceſſity produce an oppoſite Effect. Travelling does not procure it us; and Strangers are neither more worthy of our Attention, nor eaſier to be known than are the People we live among.

On the contrary, one of the Obſtacles we meet with in this Study, is an Exterior, which employs our Thoughts, and ſtops us: Theſe foreign Manners, theſe new Circumſtances divert our Attention, and contribute towards concealing Men from us; whereas the Exterior to which our Eyes are accuſtom'd, does not ſo much employ us, and is to us a far leſs Obſtacle. As to the reſt, ſince the World is known to be a ſuperficial Matter, and that its Nature is not to be penetrated, one would willingly aſk, In what Manner the Knowledge of the World ſo highly honours thoſe who have attain'd it, and that they thereby acquire the Title of *Men of the World?*

There are ſome Travellers who apply themſelves chiefly to the Study of the Language of the Country which they viſit in their Travels: They have in View the reading of the Books they there meet with; and theſe, in particular, fancy they travel to ſome Purpoſe, and reap Advantage from foreign Regions. But I cannot think, that they are upon any better Foundation than the reſt; and to me it appears, that this Sort of Study, and, indeed, that of Languages in general, may be, for the moſt Part, no other than an Abuſe. Life is ſo very

ry ſhort, that this Occupation, extended beyond the Term in which a Man is fit for nothing elſe, if it is true that there is a Term of which this may be ſaid, has ſomething in it diſproportionate and ridiculous. It is as if an Artizan, when ſo much haſten'd that he has but one Day allow'd him to finiſh the Piece of Work in Hand, ſhould ſquander away the whole Morning in getting ready other Tools and Utenſils, beſides thoſe he had before, and with which he might make an End of his Buſineſs very well.

Nay, for the Generality of Mankind, this Sort of Study has ſomething in it ſtill vainer: They cram whole Magazines full of Utenſils and Implements without having any Occaſion for them; without being Workmen: For I look upon the reading of Books, as it is now eſtabliſh'd in the World, ought to be leſs regarded than a Piece of Work, than any thing elſe laid hold on to exempt one from doing one's Duty; that it is no other than an idle Amuſement, which, generally ſpeaking, is of leſs Value than even Idleneſs itſelf, and that is of leſs Worth than are a Number of other Amuſements which Mankind make Uſe of to fool away their Time. To travel in order to procure that Satisfaction, is running after a Thing which, even at home, is not worth the Pains of being ſought for, and that with the bare Time employ'd in it is always purchas'd too dear. Let us lay aſide Travelling for a Moment, that I may have the Pleaſure of communicating to you my Thoughts concerning Reading.

For my Part, I take it, that one needs read no more than juſt enough for a little Inſtruction, to amuſe a few idle Moments, and to

give ſome Nouriſhment to the Spirits, when they begin to flag, and languiſh, and cannot without Difficulty ſupport themſelves. I look not upon any Books to be really good, or excellent, except ſuch as treat of the Faculties the Authors themſelves actually profeſs, and excel in; ſince it is certain, that none can know a Thing ſo well as ſuch who know it by Experience. Some of thoſe who have made Profeſſion of Wiſdom and Probity, and have excell'd therein, have wrote upon that Subject; and theſe Books ought to ſuffice us: They are diſtinguiſh'd from others; nay, more eſpecially becauſe they contain Sentiments which is the eſſential Language of Man, of Man in a State of Order, who ſays what actually paſſes within himſelf, and who, while in his natural Simplicity, can never fall into the embarraſſing, crooked and troubleſome Paths of Reaſoning. We are reduc'd to have Recourſe to ſo much Reaſoning, merely for Want of cultivating the Sentiments we have within us, and which would never fail us, would we but purſue them; did we but cultivate the Humanity they would produce. These Sentiments ſprout up in the Heart, from a Seed which lies there conceal'd, and which nothing but an Inclination to Virtue, at certain critical Minutes, is capable of animating. As they form themſelves in Humanity, they bear a perfect Affinity thereto; and the Truths they contain bear no leſs a Conformity to Man than do the Means which produce them. Reaſoning, when we abandon ourſelves to it, by making our principal Language and Diſcourſe to conſiſt in Argument, ſmothers our Sentiments; and as it is from a corrupted Taſte that it proceeds, it more and more

more by Degrees, corrupts our Taſte, and we wander away from that Simplicity, in which Truth is to be met with. Man, in his State of Simplicity, is ignorant of the Art of Reaſoning; and he who has his true Occupation neglects it.] It agrees only with that Inaction, that Leiſure, which throws us out of the State of Humanity, and with a certain falſe Curioſity, which that Leiſure engenders; and it ought to be left to our heady ſtubborn Caſuiſts, in whom it chiefly operates, and manifeſts its Miracles; to the Republick of Sages, who make Knowledge their Capital, and who, in their Intoxication, renounce the Advantages of the Heart, of which they know nothing, and which are utterly loſt in them.

In this State, an obſtinate Poſitiveneſs, and a froward Spirit of Controverſy, take place of the Love of Truth, of the conſcious Diffidence of knowing it ourſelves, and of the Moderation which is requiſite towards making it known to others. I cannot help looking upon theſe People, as the Authors of all that is worthleſs and ridiculous in Books, and, conſequently, as the Authors of one of the Sources of Man's Folly and Corruption: Such Heaps of frivolous, uſeleſs Traſh as they write, and treat of as Matters of Importance, is, doubtleſs, the Occaſion that all Sorts of People betake themſelves to writing, and ſtuff the World with Fooleries and Nothings; and the Example they give of an inſatiable Reading, of a whole Life ſpent in Reading, as in an Exerciſe becoming and proper for Man, has, likewiſe, its Effect, and promotes Reading more than it would, otherwiſe, be. In laying aſide all this Reading, in leaving to the Vulgar, of what Kind ſoever they be, thoſe

Myriads of Volumes which are written for them, and which, in my Opinion, would be ſufficient to pervert and make them Vulgar, if they were not ſuch before, we ſhould have our Imagination leſs loaded with Opinions, which diſtort and make it crooked, and leſs accuſtom'd to Trifles, Nothings, which extenuate and reduce it to nothing: We ſhould approach nearer to the Truth, inaſmuch as we ſhould the more give ourſelves up to what is tranſacted in the Heart, which is agreeable to the Truth, and where Truth, if ſuffer'd to act, ſeldom fails making Impreſſion: We ſhould not meaſure it by Rules which limit or confine it; and, above all, we ſhould be conſiderable Gainers in that we ſhould not reject that which does not agree with what we imagine we know already, which is what does us a hundred Times more Harm than all the Knowledge we can pick up from Reading will ever do us Good. Man is not made to heap up Ideas, and to cram Magazines with them, but to give them Room to faſhion themſelves within him, upon every Occaſion, and thereby to make a ſimple, unmix'd Uſe of his Reaſon; nor is it by any other Method that he preſerves the Liberty of Thought, upon which all true Knowledge is grounded. It may be ſaid of ſuch Numbers of People, who amaſs their Knowledge by an unlimited Reading, that they are more ignorant even than the very Vulgar themſelves, to whom they give that Denomination; that they are far leſs acquainted with the real Knowledge of Man, that Knowledge without which all the reſt, far from adorning, ſerve only to render him hideous, by giving a Sort of Luſter to a deform'd Character, which in no wiſe deſerves it. By this Knowledge,

ledge, unknown to the Learned, the deep-read Men, I underſtand that which teaches us the Price of Things; which is a Point that always ſhould be kept in View. The greateſt Part of their Learning makes apparent how remote they are from that Point: It is founded upon their Ignorance, and proves it; ſince it wholly conſiſts in a Chaos of Tranſactions and Opinions which, in the main, tend to nothing at all; in a Medly of Arguments they make Uſe of to diſplay the Art and Method of Argumentation, as Boys climb to let People ſee that they can climb. Nay, theſe Folks have even a greater Share of Stupidity than all others; ſince they are leſs capable of ſuffering themſelves to be diſabus'd, and of being made ſenſible of the Emptineſs, the *Vacuum* of the Profeſſion which of all Profeſſions in the whole World has the moſt of it, I mean the Nothingneſs of their Erudition; for that is the Matter moſt in Queſtion among the Learned; they muſt be, as it were, *diſtinctur'd* from their Literature, before they can be reduc'd to the State of Nature, Man ought to be in, and to receive the naked, ſimple and familiar Truth, which is the Ornament of Humanity. Leſs than any others in the World are they poſſeſs'd of the right Senſe, the Attention, and Freedom of Thought which render a Man reaſonable, converſable and fit for Society, and, in Effect, which render him *Man*. Their Library, as it furniſhes out their Character, ſo it is the Source of their Ideas, and their ſole Guide; and one is reduc'd to converſe with them upon the ſame Footing as we ſometimes do with Children, when we aſk them Queſtions, in Hopes of ſome natural, pretty Reply: If the Mother, Nurſe, or the like is

by, the Children are not ſuffer'd to ſpeak for themſelves, but ſomebody either anſwer for them, or put Words into their Mouths. To conclude, we ought to comprehend, that it ſhews a Weakneſs of Underſtanding to ſuffer one's ſelf to be impos'd on by all theſe uſeleſs Trifles; that the Book-learned Part of the World, who have attain'd an exact and methodical Knowledge of all that we have no Manner of Occaſion for, are a Species of Mankind we might perfectly well diſpenſe with, and whom it would be very beneficial we were without; and that this Species is no other than a Singularity of Nature, which ſhe has expos'd to our View merely for our Inſtruction, at leaſt, if we may be permitted to accuſe Nature with this odd fantaſtical Character. Perhaps, ſhe gives theſe People an Inclination to Reading, and a Capacity for Erudition much after the ſame Manner as ſhe gives to ſome certain Perſons a Propenſion to eat much, and a capacious Maw to contain what they ſwallow: Thereby ſhe makes us comprehend the Benefit ſhe beſtows upon thoſe to whom ſhe gives a free, diſengag'd Mind, fit to act, and to bring itſelf over to what is proper and convenient for it, to that which is really agreeable to Man. Let us now return to Travelling.

A main Advantage pleaded in the Behalf of Travelling, and which is mightily built upon, is the Men of Merit, thoſe excellent Men who are to be met with diſpers'd up and down the World; That is what is to be ſeen, cry our Sticklers, and to ſeek out them it is that we ought to direct our Steps. It is true that this is what may be propos'd with the moſt plauſible Appearance of Reaſon. Since People travel

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to ſee Men, they ought to endeavour to get a Sight of that Part of Mankind who are truly Men: But the Difficulty lies in the finding them, and in not undergoing a Transformation thereupon. If I might ſpeak my Sentiment as freely upon this Subject as upon others, I would willingly avow, concerning the Man of Merit, that, in ſome Reſpect, he is not to be met with at all, and after that I had render'd him as it were tranſparent in one of my Letters, I ſhould be tempted (in changing a little the Ideas in his Regard) to render him wholly inviſible in this. By this Man of Merit, I mean him who has Principles of which he never loſes Sight, and to which both his Words and his Actions bear a ſtrict Reference; the Man, who, being Maſter of no leſs a Share of Courage than of Reaſon, not only knows the Value of Things, but dares act accordingly, and whoſe Motives, which have no leſs than the Deity for their Center, are ſtill more eſtimable than are even his Actions; the Man, in all whoſe Views Conſcience bears a Part, and who, during the whole Courſe of his Life, uſes his utmoſt Endeavour to anſwer the Intent which his Creator might have had in creating him, without which he does conceive that a Man cannot poſſibly have any true Merit. In a Word, the Man of Merit is he who is really a Man, a Man fram'd for Dominion. Nor is this an Ænigma, a Riddle not to be explain'd. Man's Dominion extends over the Little World, the Microcoſm, Himſelf; whether therein to maintain Order, if any there already is, whether to eſtabliſh it, if there is none. When he puts in Practiſe this Dominion, he is a Man; he is in a Condition to execute the Will of his Creator, and the

the Creator takes Delight in making it known to him, and in making Himſelf known to him; exteriorly, by the Works of the Creation, and by Divine Writ, whereof He gives him the requiſite Intelligence, and interiorly, by the natural Inſtinct which cauſes him to depend immediately upon the Creator. Proportionably as a Man approaches this State, which is to ſay, proportionably as he becomes a Man, he gradually becomes a Man of Merit, and as he gradually becomes that, he is leſs ſeen, and endeavours ſtill to appear leſs. [As his Conduct is extremely ſimple and plain, marching with an equal Pace, ſtrait on, without turning this or that Way, his Converſation is likewiſe plain and ſimple, and ſerves only to expoſe the Sentiments of his Heart, in their own natural Colours.] This Man is not in any wiſe an Object to be gaz'd at, a Man to make a Spectacle of; and he may be found to be a Perſon ſo very different from the Ideas we commonly have of Men of celebrated Merit, that except he has ſome particular Qualities that render him conſpicuous, it is very poſſible, that of a hundred Perſons who ſee him, there may not be two of them capable of diſcerning him. One may paſs whole Days in Company with a *Plato*, without making any Diſcovery, without even ſuſpecting that it is a *Plato* we are converſing with. Having reach'd the City of his Abode, one is in a Hurry to get a Sight of this extraordinary Man, on whoſe Account the Journey was undertaken; and one is ſtrangely ſurpriz'd at finding this celebrated Philoſopher, this *Plato*, no other than the ſame plain unregarded Foreigner, with whom we have often eat, drank and convers'd familiarly, without having

having taken any more Notice of him than of any other; at finding him the *Plato* we know already, and whom we know only for an ordinary Perſon.

But be thoſe Men of Merit, whoſe Acquaintance we ſeek after, whatever they will, why muſt we needs ſeek for them among Strangers? Why do we not rather endeavour to be acquainted with thoſe of our own Country? There are Men of Merit all the World over; and we muſt not imagine, but that the Thing which is the moſt valuable Part of the Earth, the Salt, the Quinteſſence of it, is diſtributed every where. But they are not known every where. Let us endeavour to diſcover thoſe we have among ourſelves; we may, perhaps, have Travelling enough before we meet with them; nor will the Journey afford either leſs Variety or Profit than if, in Search of them, we had travell'd to diſtant Regions. By taking a cloſe View of People of all Claſſes, to whoſe Reputation we are no Strangers, we ſhall perceive how fallacious Reputation generally is; we ſhall become acquainted with thoſe ſingular Tempers and Diſpoſitions, which becauſe their Sentiments differ from thoſe of others, becauſe they have a right Way of thinking, paſs for odd and prepoſterous. We ſhall find in Perſons, cry'd down and exclaim'd againſt for ſome mighty Failings, which render them inſupportable, great Qualities, ſolid Judgment, Probity and Sincerity, which make rich Amends for all their ſo inſupportable Blemiſhes; and in others, who are look'd upon as exempt from all Blame, we ſhall be ſo far from finding in them Encouragement to contract a Friendſhip, that we ſhall be put hard to it to diſcover in them any Footſtep

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of Humanity. We ſhall be aſtoniſh'd to find Merit in People who never bore that Character, nor were ever regarded; and to meet with Arrogance, Preſumption and Narrowneſs of Soul in the Majority of thoſe who paſs for grand Perſonages. We ſhall diſcover the Nothingneſs of theſe Men in Vogue, who are call'd ſmart, pretty Fellows, Men of Wit, and the contemptible Emptineſs of thoſe who bear the Title of *Literati*, Men of Letters and Erudition, if we extend our Curioſity ſo far as to dive into them. In a Word, we ſhall meet with, in our Ramble, abundance of Things we never expected, and very commodiouſly, much at our Eaſe, we may view thoſe Objects. How much more agreeable ought we not to think this Sort of Travelling than the other? How much more advantageous muſt it not be, ſince it will bring us acquainted with thoſe People among whom we are to paſs our Lives? If by it we can but attain the Advantage of having no farther Dependance on the Opinion of Men, whom we know for ſuch bad Judges, or at leaſt, to depend leſs upon it, we ſhall have travell'd to a far better Purpoſe than if we had viſited every Foot of Land in *Europe*.

If the Acquaintance of Perſons of Merit is not a ſufficient Motive to induce us to travel, ſtill much leſs ought we to travel with the Opinion that Travelling, of itſelf, furniſhes us with Merit. If it is true that the Ground-Work of all Merit is Integrity, or rather that Merit itſelf is the ſame as Integrity and Probity, after what Manner is it that we muſt needs acquire it by Travelling, as is pretended? It expoſes before our Eyes a general Corruption, and plainly convinces us, that Virtue is a Stranger in every

every Climate; for in all Countries, the Bad is what generally preſents itſelf to one's View, and what Remnant there ſtill may be of Good, lies conceal'd; ſo that Travelling muſt much rather deſtroy than eſtabliſh Merit in a Traveller, at leaſt, in all thoſe who are converſant only with undiſtinguiſh'd Perſons, and who are more attentive to what is receiv'd by the Multitude than to Singularities, upon whom the Crowd ſet no Price, and which they themſelves want a Capacity to do. Had Travelling no more then this one Inconveniency attending it, that a Traveller has perpetually before his Eyes the ordinary and corrupt Manner of Life now in Practice, which ſtill confirms them in his own Corruption, and that the few Examples which oppoſe it are conceal'd from their Inſpection, that ought to be ſufficient to diſcredit Travelling; and the ſmall Attention us'd by Travellers fully convince us, that People ſend their Youth abroad to ſee the World upon a Foundation quite different from the Proſpect of ſeeing them return compleat Gentlemen.

In regard to the Majority of them, it may be ſaid, that Travelling is a very efficacious Method to confirm them in the vicious Diſpoſitions may be in them, and to perſuade them, that Pleaſure, Riches, Grandeur, Luxury, and the like, are Man's Bleſſings, that his Happineſs conſiſts in the Enjoyment of thoſe Benefits, and that his Parts and Ability are diſplay'd in procuring the Means, or at leaſt, that it is only certain Exceſſes in all this that can be blame-worthy; that Perſons of Merit are thoſe who rectify Things, and avoid Exceſs, who know how to accommodate themſelves according to the Time, and to manage their own Affairs,

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and that this is what it behoves every one to obſerve. Travelling is a Method very proper to give Youth a falſe Merit, which is, perhaps, more directly oppoſite to true Merit than are all the common Vices or Defects which we endeavour to correct in them. It is where they may confirm themſelves in Preſumption and Indocility, and aſſume an Aſſurance which compleats the rendering their Character important, even as important as they could wiſh it to be, and ſets to it, as we may ſay, the finiſhing Stroke. Upon this Foot, it would be very true, that young People are faſhion'd by Travelling; and Fathers, who generally have the ſame Ideas as their Sons, will have the Pleaſure of ſeeing the Education they have beſtow'd on them authoriz'd and brought to Perfection by Travelling. But let us examine a little after what Manner People perform their Travels; for after all, that is the Matter moſt in Queſtion, in order to paſs a Judgment, and to ſet a Price upon Travelling.

It is eſtabliſh'd, that a young Man, who has attain'd a certain Age, muſt quit his Country, and that for the Reaſons I have been already touching upon: He wants Education and Merit; the Publick perceives it, and cannot ſet that Value upon him as is deſir'd. It is requiſite, therefore, for him to abſent himſelf, and to give Room to the Publick to forget him, to think that he is gone in Search of what he wants, and which he can never meet with at home. Or if this Reaſon does not take Place, if he is a promiſing, hopeful Youth, it is eſtabliſh'd that Travelling is the readieſt Way to compleat his Character; and with this View he is ſent abroad. So that, for ſome Reaſon

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or other, Cuſtom demands that a young Man ſhould leave his Home, diſappear for a while, and ſee the World. If this can be effected under the Direction of ſome prudent Perſon, who will take Care of him, will interpoſe between the World and him, and parry off its Blows, it will certainly be ſo much the better; and if the Ability and Capacity of this Tutor can extend ſo far as to make the corrupted, the corrupting World inſtrumental towards the rendering this young Man wiſe, all the Advantage that can poſſibly be hop'd for, both from the Tutor and from the World, is, certainly, obtain'd. But, for the Generality, this is not the Caſe; I ſpeak only of ordinary Travellers. In what Country, or after what Manner ſoever they paſs the Time allotted them for their Travels, is not much to the Purpoſe; they are in a foreign Country, and they remain there as long as they have Occaſion. One would think, that the different Characters of Nations ſhould carry along with them at leaſt this Advantage, that ſuch Perſons who cannot bring it about to correct themſelves by Reaſon, might there meet with Matter enough to do it, with leſs Difficulty, by Example and Practice: But this is what is not at all regarded; and it muſt be mere Chance, a favourable Chance that conducts them, and makes them find their *Antipodes*, People whoſe Character is oppoſite to their own, can ſtand Battle with it, and take its Place. They hope for and expect all Things from Travelling, and yet do not direct their Steps according to their Neceſſities; leſs clear-ſighted in that Reſpect than in any other whatever. The Trader, who has Occaſion for Wool, does not go to *Italy* for it, nor he who wants Silk

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to *England*: But Mr. ſuch a one wants a little Flegm, and he goes to *France*: Another is found to have too much; his Friends deſire to brighten him, and ſend him to travel in *Holland*. It is no Manner of Advantage to them, that there are Nations of different Characters; they peruſe not the great Book of the World with the Attention and Application it requires; they only run it over, ſkipping from Place to Place, merely to look at the Pictures. They take a View of the Buildings of the Cities they paſs thro', their Fortifications, Churches, Colleges, Hoſpitals, the Arſenal, the Library, the Cabinet of Curioſities, *&c.* They go to Court, and ſee the Prince at Dinner; they poſt themſelves in his Way as he goes to Chapel, or get a near View of him on ſome other Occaſion; and the Uſe they pretend to put all this to, is to talk of it, and to have it in their Power, every now and then, to ſay, *We have ſeen it*; *We have been there.* They make Proviſion of a Budget of Singularities, Facts, and little Adventures of their own to talk of, all which ſerves to help out in Converſation, which, more than all the reſt, muſt needs be improv'd by Travelling; not unlike Boys, who run to the Sea Shore, and to ſhew they have been there, fill their Pockets with little Shells, they bring home all that ſerves to diſtinguiſh a Traveller from another Man. The Things that in their Conception have moſt of the *grand* in them, and conſequently beſt worth ſeeing, are publick Solemnities, pompous Ceremonies, Reviews, Proceſſions, Maſquerades, and the like, as being Sights which a vaſt Conflux of Spectators renders ſtill more conſiderable; but more particularly a Coronation, which amaſſes People from

from all Parts: Theſe make Travelling a Matter of Importance, as feeding the Traveller's Eyes with noble Spectacles. He who has the good Fortune to have been an Eye-Witneſs of a Solemnity of this Kind, has nothing more to ſee after that: He returns home to his Acquaintance, big with this, and as full of Joy and Content as if the Crown had been ſet upon his own Temples, and is by them receiv'd with Veneration. All that know of this glorious Circumſtance of his Life, throng around him, look at him with Attention, and think, in Regard to him, that a peculiar Train of good Luck attends ſome People, and that they are born to extraordinary Rencounters. But, even when the Traveller has not all this to ſhew at his Return from his Peregrinations; when, inſtead of Diamonds, he has only Pebbles to produce, he ſtill never fails coming home rich and ſatisfied: He is ſenſible of the Succeſs of all Travels, and knows what waits for him at his Return. He was no more thought of; and here he appears all on a ſudden, thereby become a new Man, on Account of the Eyes he draws after him, and which, in Effect, gives him a new Countenance. The Diſpoſition of a whole City, waiting with Expectation, is at that Time chang'd for him, and it alſo changes his for all that ſee him, at leaſt as long as the Feaſt laſts, and he has wherewithal to furniſh out Matter for the Curioſity of thoſe to whom he expoſes himſelf as a Show. Before he is quite drain'd, another Traveller arrives, and turns away the Eyes of the Publick from him, and this laſt Comer is, in like Manner, exalted, and, by the Arrival of others, deliver'd from a too tireſome Perquiſition: So that, in caſe Travels are not

attended with all the Benefits which are attributed to them, they fail not, however, of being intirely as advantageous to the Traveller as he can either expect or desire: They put between him and the Publick wherewithal to content them reciprocally. The Publick will needs be fond of the Wonders which the World exposes to Sale, in being fond of those who have had a Sight of them; and these, for their Part, are over-joy'd at the Publick's Regard to them, on that Score, which renders them little Wonders themselves, and still confirms them in that Regard. Be it how it will, it is for the Publick that we travel, and it is the Publick that recompences the Pains we are at in travelling. To consider rambling the World in that Light, it would not be so unprofitable as it may appear at the first Blush; and we might, perhaps, find still other Advantages in it, if examin'd with the most favourable Dispositions. Let us look into this Affair: Let us continue to consider it on its fairest Side, and then return to what I at first intimated, concerning Man in general; wherein, it may be, I have not div'd deep enough.

I take it, that Men may be consider'd in two Lights. They are Men; that is to say, Creatures consummately noble, whose Price depends on themselves, by investing themselves with Humanity, whereby they shew themselves endow'd with all Kinds of Qualities which embellish and adorn them.

They may likewise be consider'd in the different Stations they hold in their respective Occupations, whether they have devoted themselves to officiate in the Magistracy, the Field, the School, in Trade, *&c.* They agree, and are right

right enough in the Idea they have of theſe different Profeſſions, and in the Price they ſet upon them; nor are they very much at a Loſs as to the Preparatives which theſe ſeveral Vocations require in order to officiate therein anſwerable to their Ideas. But in reſpect to Man in himſelf, in reſpect to plain, ſimple Humanity, their Idea is not ſo clear: The Caſe appears to them dubious and intricate; and they agree only in this Point, that they do not conſider it as a State proper for a Man. But as theſe different States of Life are found to be grounded upon Humanity, and as to be a worthy Statesman, or a worthy Captain, it is abſolutely neceſſary to be, more or leſs, a Man, they find that Humanity muſt not be wholly neglected, and are oblig'd in ſome Manner to adopt it, and to inculcate it into young People. Beſides, there are ſome Intervals of Life wherein one finds oneſelf reduc'd to Humanity; for, in Effect, theſe particular Occupations do not perpetually take Place: The Magiſtrate cannot always exerciſe his Function, nor the Soldier his Sword, and ſo of the reſt; Humanity now and then intervenes, and becomes an Occupation to be follow'd like the others. Some Regard muſt neceſſarily be had to Humanity, and we muſt have enough of it not to be caught altogether unprovided therewithal upon an Emergency. But in this, as in every Thing elſe, Men have moſt judiciouſly comprehended, that all Exceſſes are to be avoided, and take Care not to engage themſelves in Humanity ſo far as to be caught in the Net, and ſo become Man in Earneſt: For they have before their Eyes the Example of thoſe ſingular Men of Antiquity, known by the odious Name of Philoſophers. Thoſe Men, or ſome

of their Number, ſeriouſly determin'd and made their Choice, and in renouncing the ſeveral uſual States and Conditions of Life, thoſe Circumſtances of Humanity, enter'd into the State of Humanity itſelf, and, as a Set of People, Strangers to the reſt of Mankind, attracted their Attention, and became their Gazing-Stock. Nay, in theſe our own Days, ſhould any one venture himſelf to tread thoſe unknown Regions, eſpecially if he is ſo raſh as to offer to penetrate too far, he runs an apparent Hazard of miſſing the Road, and loſing himſelf beyond Recovery, as thoſe others did of old. Men, in this Perplexity, have Recourſe to the only remaining Expedient. It is univerſally agreed, that Humanity ought to have ſome Sort of Hommage paid it, ſince, be it as it will, Man is Man, of Human Species, and all imagine, that, in aſſuming Humanity, they render to it the Exterior and the Appearances, and thereby inhance their own Value; and from hence it is that Travelling takes its Merit. We roam abroad not only to be Eye-Witneſſes how far thoſe who have the publick Approbation extend the Appearances of Humanity, in order to imitate and become like them, but Travelling itſelf is a Proof that, in Regard to Humanity, the World entertains thoſe moderate Sentiments which are requiſite to be had on that Subject; that it places in Man's Exterior the Value that Men have agreed to ſet upon it, which extends ſo far as to dedicate a conſiderable Part of their Lives in Queſt thereof.

Travelling, conſider'd in this Light, may very well be ſaid to be attended with the Advantages attributed to it; and there would be Room to ſtand up in its Juſtification, even in the

the circumſtantial Detail I had enter'd upon. Youth would be in the Right to travel in order to faſhion their Intellectuals, and to have them form'd like thoſe of others. It is true that Travelling ſerves rather to form our Turn of Wit, as we term it, than our Wit or Underſtanding itſelf; but this Article is what recommends it, ſince by doing that it ſaves us abundance of Pains: For as the Appearances of Humanity excuſes our being truly Men, the Appearances of Senſe excuſes one from having it in Effect, from having the true Diſcernment belonging to it, which is ſo difficult to be acquir'd, ſo little regarded, and ſo ſeldom met with; and Travelling, by qualifying us to talk by Rote, and thereby ſetting us above all ſolid Attention, which lays us under a Conſtraint, ſets us above People of real Senſe, who ſo frequently find themſelves forc'd and conſtrain'd. People would be, likewiſe, in the Right to travel in order to know the World: Deportment, Behaviour, which make up the Eſſential of this Knowledge, form themſelves perfectly well by Travelling, if not by Travelling at leaſt by the Conſideration of having travell'd: We from thence aſſume an Air of Importance, a Countenance which gives Notice that we expect to receive from others all that we are ready to give them, and which indicates to them the Price they ought to ſet upon us. This is receiv'd and eſtabliſh'd: The Publick reſpects the diſtinguiſhing Mark we ſet upon ourſelves, and which we bring from ſo far, and ratifies it. Hereby we have, in the common Courſe of Life, a valuable Sanctuary, and an infallible Preſervative againſt being ever after eaſily diſabus'd and undeceiv'd as to the Eſteem we have

of ourſelves. We are excus'd from all Attention to what paſſes within ourſelves, which of all others is the moſt painful, and from the Knowledge of ourſelves, which is, generally, the moſt uncomfortable of all Knowledge. In the Study of the World, when in order to excel we make it our only, or at leaſt, our chief Study, we paſs our Life agreeably, ſatisfied with ourſelves and with others; and Travelling, as being no other than a Walk we take up and down in the World, is, in that Reſpect, of no ſmall Importance, in accuſtoming us to inſpect into nothing but what preſents itſelf to our View, and to enjoy rather than know it, to be ſeen and lik'd rather than known. Travelling gives us to underſtand, that, to make Advantage of Life, we muſt, likewiſe, make a Walk of it, a Pleaſure, a Diverſion which looks no farther than the preſent Moment; and this is, perhaps, the Uſe to which the Majority of Travellers put their Peregrinations, and their ſole View. As to the Study of Languages, to the which Travelling gives us Room to apply ourſelves, we reap from it not only a Multiplicity of Reading, which adds to the Knowledge we had before amaſs'd, a Variety of other Knowledge which continues ſtill to help to diſpenſe us from the Knowledge of ourſelves: But, independent of all Reading, Languages are an Ornament: They ſuffice to place the Poſſeſſor among the Number of the Learned; and if they do not abundantly forward the Maturation of one's Mind, they, at leaſt, give it Room to repoſe, and one is thereby diſpens'd from producing its Fruit. But above all Things, Travelling may afford us Satisfaction in what regards Perſons of Worth, Men of Merit: The ſame Motive that ſets People

ple upon Travelling, prepares, it ſeems, ready to the Traveller's Hand, what is convenient he ſhould have; it forms exactly that very Merit he ſeeks for.

Thoſe Perſons who are adorn'd with all amiable Qualifications, and who among their Embelliſhments introduce a Portion of Virtue, as much as is neceſſary to enhance their Character, and to make them paſs for virtuous Men, meet with univerſal Applauſe. Some of this Claſs a curious Traveller can no more miſs of, in his Rambles, than he can of the City whither he directs his Courſe, and to which the High-Road conducts him. Nor can their Example, ever in the leaſt, fail of encouraging the Traveller, in like Manner, to render himſelf that Man in Vogue, that conſpicuous Perſon, who *knows how* to adorn himſelf with whatever is receiv'd and eſtabliſh'd, and to acquire that Merit, of which Reputation is both the Motive and the Recompence. But even if Travelling does not altogether reach that Length, if it does not furniſh a young Man with all that *knowing how to do*, which this Merit requires, it will ſtill ſerve to make him loſe that unfaſhionable Character of former Ages, which ſtands in his Way to oppoſe his Career; that embarraſſing Modeſty, that Baſhfulneſs which is ſo troubleſome, and which Nature, when let alone to operate, preſerves in Youth, and ſeems to pleaſe herſelf in diſtinguiſhing thereby thoſe who are well-born. Travelling is an approv'd Remedy againſt this Embarraſment, and upon this Score, more than all the reſt, one may ſtand up in its Behalf. It is certain, and all that proves it, that the current Merit of our Age demands, either the bold Character of the

Vulgar, which diſpenſes them from Travelling for a Character, or Travelling, which leads us to fetch from abroad this happy Boldneſs, which enables us courageouſly to ſoar above Age and Experience, and tranſports Youth, with all its Vivacity, into the Character of ripe and compleat Man. Some how or other, Travelling diſpenſes us from a painful, troubleſome Merit, and which is ſeldom acquir'd till very late, and inſtead thereof, by Way of Subrogation, intails on us another, which is eaſy, and whoſe Formation requires but a few Years, a Merit which has this Advantage over the other, that it makes us very well ſatisfied with ourſelves, provided others are ſo. In a Word, Travelling ſets us in a Condition to reap from ourſelves the ſame Advantage the World does; it is left to us to judge whether or no that is very conſiderable, and whether it is very much worth the while to travel.

But let us ſay a few Words of Travelling in Regard to our own Nation, and let us handle the Subject a little more ſeriouſly. Our Fore-Fathers were not Travellers: It was not eſtabliſh'd among them, that they muſt faſhion themſelves by foreign Models, in order to make themſelves look'd upon. Probity, Sincerity and Stedfaſtneſs ſufficiently adorn'd them; and they were ignorant that Men with thoſe Qualities, ſtood in Need of Manners or Behaviour, or that in order to be valued in their own Country they muſt relinquiſh it, and ranſack remote Regions for wherewithal to pleaſe the Publick. With the Manners and Character acquir'd in their reſpective Families, they not only paſs'd their Lives laudably and with Dignity at home, but carried with them their Manners to ſuch foreign

foreign Lands as their Occaſions call'd them to viſit, from whence, rather proud than aſham'd of them, they again return'd them to their own Homes. Without the leaſt out-landiſh Mixture in their Character, they liv'd honourably, and left to our Nation a Reputation ſo firmly eſtabliſh'd, that it is only now at laſt, after a long Series of Years, that we have brought about its Deſtruction. But likewiſe, ſay our modiſh Folks, thoſe good People, for want of quitting their Mountains to come down and faſhion themſelves a little, were wonderfully ruſtick, unmannerly, and ſimple, and had but a very ſmall Share of the Enjoyment of Life. They enjoy'd Life more than we do. As among them the Pleaſures of Life depended not on foreign Things, but on the natural Products of the Country, they enjoy'd them with Appetite, and their Lives glided away in Eaſe and Felicity. If by the Unpoliteneſs and Ruſticity they are reproach'd with, is meant their Uſage of doing and ſaying all Things naturally, and anſwerable to their own proper eſſential Character, if they term Simplicity the Incapacity of counterfeiting or diſguiſing, of attempting to deceive or impoſe on others by borrowed Qualities, it is a freſh Eulogy given them; and moſt certainly, could they return to the World, they would glory in what we make the Object of our Reproach, as they would, undoubtedly, reproach us with what we value ourſelves upon. Could People but tranſport themſelves from theſe to former Times, as they travel into other Countries, thither it would be that one might, indeed, be tempted to take a Ramble. The clowniſh, unpoliſh'd Commonwealth of thoſe Days gives the Idea of a Fabrick rais'd out of unwrought Fragments of a Rock, which has both Majeſty

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and Solidity: That of this Day, our Nation, with all the Splendor and Politeneſs wherewith it ſtrives to embelliſh itſelf, repreſents to the Imagination nothing but Paint and Varniſh; and I am perſuaded, that the Cuſtoms, Manners and Character of our Anceſtors had more real Decency and Decorum in them than have the Manners and Character we affect. Every Nation has its own Character, given it by Nature, which is appropriated to the Soil, and to the Circumſtances of its Inhabitants: Each Nation has, alſo, its peculiar Manners and Uſages, as a neceſſary Conſequence of its Character. No real Alteration ſhould be made in either of theſe Particulars, but their Owners ought to content themſelves with rectifying where there is Occaſion; they ſhould cultivate the Character, and adapt the Manners to it. To go abroad for Manners to bring them home, is juſt toiling to become a Foreigner in one's own Country.

But the Miſchief Travelling does us extends not only to the cauſing us to transform our ancient Character; it introduces among us Cuſtoms and Uſages which are our Deſtruction: Luxury, which we ought to ſhun more than any thing elſe whatever, and which leſs ſutes us than any other Nation in the Univerſe. We are ſo little adapted to it, that it renders us ridiculous in the Eyes of every rational Man, nay even in the Eyes of thoſe we call worldly Men, who love Luxury when in its own proper Province: For what is to be ſeen among other Nations is proportion'd to their Opulency, and ours is wholly diſproportionate to our Poverty, or, if you will have it ſo, to our Riches, which inſtantly melt away thro' the Diſtribution ſo made of them. The Folly of foreign Nations

Nations lies in consuming in Luxury the Superfluity; and this Folly is exclaim'd against by Persons of better Sense among them: Ours is in employing therein the Necessary: This reaches to Extravagance; and I am not positive, that we have among us many Persons who are mov'd by it, and who are sensible of it in its whole Extent. Our Country is not cut out for Luxury: Neither does the Character of its Inhabitants, which, originally, consists in Cordiality, and plain down right Integrity, nor the Soil itself, which requires Œconomy and Labour, and produces only what serves for the mere Necessities of Life, afford us the least Encouragement to quit a plain simple Manner of living; Luxury being so absolutely a Foreigner in our Climate, that not only it was nothing else but our Travels into other Countries that first brought us acquainted with it, but likewise every Thing that conduces towards it is convey'd to us from thence; and that is what compleats the Mischief it does us. Nay, it is Luxury, and all voluptuous living, which drag along with them Confusion and a total Neglect of domestick Cares, banish from Families all Œconomy and Tranquillity, and fills all with Disorder. It is Luxury that nourishes Pride, the Forerunner of Ruin, which deprives Men of their Eye-sight, sets them above Precautions, and urges them to fall into wrong Measures; Pride, which renders them no less odious than Luxury does ridiculous, and which breaks off that Union wherein the Strength and Safety of a People consists. Nor should Pride find any better Encouragement among us than Luxury, since, in Comparison with our Neighbours, who surround us, we are as inconsiderable

rable as we are poor. But, above all, Luxury is prejudicial to us, in that it lays us under the Neceſſity of acquiring wherewithal to ſupport it. From thence ariſes a Neceſſity of entering into Emploies, and to obtain them nothing is left untried: This engenders, or at leaſt increaſes Fraud, Perjury, Extortion, and all thoſe deteſtable Actions, which brand the Perpetrators, and the Nations among whom theſe Things become common, with a Mark of Infamy, ſo hideous and deform'd, that all the Pomp and Luxury in the World can never eraſe it. All the diſaſtrous Conſequences with which Luxury can be attended, and even thoſe which it has not any where elſe, it has for us: In the End it will be found, that the Diſſipation of our Wealth is the leaſt of all the Evils it brings upon us, and were that a Remedy to deliver us from it intirely, I know not whether that Particular might not be look'd upon rather as a publick Benefit than an Evil. If it was a Matter now in Agitation, whether to introduce Luxury among us, or to forbid it, any Man of Underſtanding, who was ſenſible how little it ſuits our Conveniency, if he could not ſucceed by diſſuading us by ſolid Reaſon and Argument, might be tempted to introduce it, to the End that he might make Trial, well ſatisfied that we ſhould deteſt and abhor it, when we found its Conſequences.

But, he would find himſelf miſtaken; for Luxury dazzles the Eyes of Men, and corrupts them to ſo great a Degree, that thereby they become in a Manner depriv'd of their rational Faculties; at leaſt, it muſt produce this Effect upon thoſe to whom it is a Stranger, and who, as they have it only by Imitation, carry it beyond

beyond all Bounds, and know not how to govern themſelves according to the Means they have to ſupport it. This we are taught by Experience: He who plainly ſees his Ruin before his Eyes, ſtill purſues the Path that leads him to it; and he who beholds his Neighbour's Fall, is ſo far from being terrified, or deterr'd, that he dreams of nothing but how to out-do him, and puts himſelf in a Sweat to follow him down the Precipice. The Mother and the Children join with the Father of the Family, and, upon this Article, bear a ſtrict Harmony with him: Or if the Contagion proceeds from them, the Maſter of the Houſe has not the Power to reſiſt his Wife and Children, and at laſt follows their Foot-ſteps; but ſo or otherwiſe, they all hurry down the Hill, and ruin themſelves in Concert with each other. Luxury and foreign Manners find Entrance even among Men of the beſt Underſtandings; and render them like thoſe who have loſt their Senſes: It is true, they do not ruin themſelves; but they ſet Examples of a Courſe of Life, by imitating which others meet their Ruin; and it is their Example, in particular, which ſeduces them, and occaſions the Miſchief. All this makes more common the unjuſt Methods of amaſſing Wealth, and of repairing diſſipated Fortunes; thoſe baſe Practiſes loſe their Infamy, and even become ſupportable to the very Perſons who once held them in Deteſtation. The Manner of living of theſe Times, when once admitted among them, charms their Senſes; they become like ſo many Statues: They embelliſh the Common-Weal; their Attitude is that of honeſt Men, naturally diſpos'd to do their Duty, and laying aſide this they actually do it: But the Miſchief

is,

is, they ought to do it in this Particular, they ought to diſpel the Enchantment, and to prevent out-landiſh Modes from doing us all the Prejudice we have Cauſe to apprehend, from compleating our utter Ruin.

Luxury and Travelling, join'd together, drag after them a Courſe of Life which is adapted to them, and which is as pernicious as its Appearances are beautiful and commendable: I mean, in particular, the Liberty which young People of both Sexes have of ſeeing one another when they pleaſe, of paſſing whole Days together, and of devoting the far beſt Portion of their Times to Diverſion. Even provided it was true, that other Nations ſet us this Example, which is not ſo, at leaſt in Regard to the Female Sex, ſince they have no where the Liberty, while Virgins, of being alone with Men, it would ſtill be a Way of living very contrary to Decency, and which all the Precaution, all the Reſerve that might be imagin'd or hop'd for could never juſtify, nor prevent its being attended with very bad Conſequences. Certain it is, that Maidens, by daily ſeeing, and converſing familiarly with young Men, part with that Shyneſs, that Modeſty, that becoming Baſhfulneſs, and the Taſte of a retir'd Life ſo requiſite in their Sex. Marriage, which ſhould put an End to that Sort of Life, inſtead of being to them a State of Happineſs and Satisfaction, becomes, if they marry Men of Judgment who know how to govern their Families, a State of Conſtraint, of Diſcontent; and if they marry Men of Gaiety and Pleaſure, they continue in their former Way of Life, which is as little proper for married Women as for Virgins, no more convenient for the Huſband than for

for the Wife; and of theſe two Evils this laſt is that which is moſt to be fear'd, and which moſt commonly happens. This Intercourſe, this over-great Familiarity, has ſtill another Inconveniency; it leſſens the Eſteem of both Parties for each other, and People join in Wedlock with very indifferent Diſpoſitions, the Foundation of a good Marriage, which conſiſts in a reciprocal Eſteem, being thereby ſhaken even before the Eſpouſals. Young Girls thereby learn to take a Pleaſure in ſeeing Men in general; and they afterwards find it very difficult to fix themſelves to their Huſbands, and to be intirely attach'd to them. Huſbands, on the other Side, ſuffer themſelves to be led away by the Allurements of Diverſity, of Company, and break in upon that ſtrict Union in which the Sweets of Matrimony conſiſt. All this breeds Diviſions, Quarrels and a Propenſion to illicitous Pleaſures, which thoſe Diviſions ſtill augment. In a Word, ſome, from this Source, abandon themſelves in Earneſt, and in others it creates an Inſenſibility of the abominable Vileneſs of ſuch Proceedings; and from thence it is that, at laſt, the Road to all Corruption is laid open. From thence, likewiſe, proceeds the indifferent Education of Children, which makes the Diſtemper utterly incurable. Certain it is, that Perſons addicted to Pleaſure, to the Paſs that the Manners of our preſent Age would direct them, even if they are not arriv'd to the laſt Degree of Corruption, but have rather ſome Inclination to Good, are incapable of giving their Children a good Education: The Example before their Eyes of a Life paſs'd in Pleaſures out weighs all the Inſtructions can be given them, and infallibly corrupts them: The poor Children

Children, ſtraying away from their natural Simplicity, and inuring themſelves to Trifles, Appearances, Vanity and Diſguiſe, form an Idea of a falſe Merit, which removes them farther from that Merit which Man ought to have in View, the Order into which he ought to re-enter, than any other Particular whatever. If this Courſe of Life hinders Men from acquitting themſelves of domeſtick Duties, it is a no leſs Obſtacle in regard to the publick Duties: Thoſe who enter on Emploies in the Magiſtracy, carry with them the Corruption which they had introduced into their Families, and very far from remedying Abuſes, they authorize, and render them univerſal, both by the Example they ſet, and the Reaſons they find to juſtify them. As to the reſt, all theſe Niceties, theſe Improvements, and this Kind of Politeneſs which People affect, and by which they pretend to enhance the Price of the Manners of our preſent Age, are directly, and in themſelves, what our Nation ought to deſpiſe. Theſe Things as little agree with the Maſculine Character which Nature has given us, as Paint and Female Ornaments would become a Man. What an Averſion ought we not to bear them, ſince they cauſe us to degenerate, and transform us into Women, in Effect, and bring along with them a Corruption, and Indignities, which ſo intirely diſguiſe us, that we are no longer to be known for the ſame People!

But what Obligations do not well-inclin'd Perſons lie under, who, by the Emploies they hold, are become Publick Men? Doubtleſs they are under very great ones, and at any Price ſoever they ought to ſtand their Ground firmly in Oppoſition to foreign Manners, in Oppoſition to Luxury and Corruption, which undo us. The Truth,

Truth is, there is a Pleaſure in battling with Luxury, ſince the only Matter in Debate is, by Dint of good Argument, to plead the Cauſe of an eaſy, plain, and reaſonable Way of Life. Of all the Taſks requir'd of an honeſt Man, this is the eaſieſt; and it can ſcarce be comprehended how we meet with ſo ſmall a Number of People who make Choice of it for themſelves. But as for the Reſiſtance to be made againſt the Corruption which Luxury produces, ſomething more than an ordinary Reſolution is requir'd; and there are ſome Caſes, wherein compleatly to acquit one's ſelf of one's Duty, one muſt have a good Portion of heroick Virtue, and a Strength not to be attain'd in Luxury and an effeminate voluptuous Life. But then again, every Man who deſigns to execute his Duty in the Employ he holds in the Magiſtracy, is actually *call'd* to this State of Heroiſm: In entering into this Profeſſion, he enters into an open War againſt all Vice and Corruption, and ought to be always in Expectation of Occaſions either to illuſtrate him, or to expoſe him for Neglect of his Duty, and for deſerting his Country's Intereſt in its Neceſſity. It is my Opinion, that all will agree, that every honeſt Man ought much rather to expoſe, nay ſacrifice himſelf for the Service of his Country, than to deſert it in Time of Need. I would gladly add one Reflection upon this Point. Honeſt Men have generally a Maxim which limits and refrains them from giving to their Country all the Aſſiſtance that the Exigence of ſome important Caſes demands. They content themſelves with voting for it with their whole Might, and think not themſelves oblig'd to a perſonal Maintenance of thoſe Suffrages, or to buſtle in the

Affair ſo vigorouſly as they might; and the Reaſon they give is, that it ſeldoms happens that ſo doing advances the Cauſe, and they ſhould only expoſe themſelves to no Purpoſe. Here, I believe them to be miſtaken: I take it, that every Man, who bears an Office, ſhould have little Regard to the Succeſs, when the Cauſe in Queſtion tends to what is equitable and neceſſary; that he then ought to do his Duty, and execute his Function to its utmoſt Extent; and this Duty is very plain, and depends neither on the Reſolution of another to do his, nor on the many Meaſures taken in order to ſucceed. The Succeſs of every Enterprize is the Affair of Providence, which has a thouſand Ways to bring about its Deſigns; and the Conduct of honeſt Men in the Exigences which offer is of greater Importance in the Eyes of Providence than is the Succeſs itſelf. If it permits a Thing to depend on the Conduct of Mortals, it is merely to try them, and to give them an Opportunity of doing their Duty. But if the Succeſs does not anſwer the honeſt Man's Endeavours, he has, however, comply'd with his Obligation, in doing what he was able, and it is not his Fault that Juſtice did not take Place: This is a Satisfaction both to himſelf and to the Publick; ſince the Welfare of the Publick chiefly depends upon honeſt Men. Every Man, in a publick Station, ought to do the ſame for his Country that *Socrates* did for his; at the Hazard of being left alone, and of undergoing the Hatred and the Violence of all thoſe whom he had oppos'd, he ought to keep his Footing courageouſly againſt whatever blemiſhes its Character, and to baniſh from it all Reproach, and that Impunity which authorizes

riaes Vice, and cultivates it; nor need we more than a ſmall Number of Men, of the ancient Character of our Nation, to render it this important Piece of Service.

Happy Nation, could it but return to itſelf, and did it but know how to enjoy its Advantages! Equity, Simplicity and Probity were its Inheritance; with theſe Nature embelliſh'd it, while others deck'd themſelves out with vain Pageantries, and oſtentatious Ornaments, now in ſuch Vogue here. In its State of Simplicity, it ſent forth Armies which gave it a Superiority over very powerful Oppoſers; and what in our Anceſtors was the Object of their Enemy's Contempt prov'd fatal to the Contemners: It made itſelf eſteem'd by its Juſtice; and by its original Character it rais'd itſelf as far above other Nations as, at preſent, it ſinks beneath them by debaſing itſelf to imitate them: Never had Nation leſs Cauſe to be weary of its Character! How could it be poſſible for us to relinquiſh it, to liſt ourſelves among the Crowd of Imitators, and that we ſhould prefer to Realities, adapted to us, Appearances which do not agree with our Circumſtances, and which drive us into crooked Paths ſtill leſs proper, leſs agreeable? It ſeems as if Providence, which governs the Univerſe, was diſpos'd, that, among the Nations of the Earth, there ſhould be one of a plain ſimple Character, which being without a large Share of Wealth as well as without Pretenſions to any extraordinary Pomp and Splendor, lay under no Temptation of degenerating into Luxury. A happy Obſcurity, a Courſe of Life far remote from all Oſtentation, all Effeminacy, ought to have made us in Love with our

Mountains, and to have fix'd us there. In that Situation Providence was diſpos'd to have protected us, exempt from the Troubles and Diſorders which agitate the reſt of the World, and to have propos'd us for a Model. Providence in us had a Mind to recompence the World for the Loſs of Nature's Order, deſigning us as a Remnant, preſerv'd in the View of the whole Earth, a Character utterly loſt, and baniſh'd from wealthy and voluptuous Nations. How, I ſay once again, how could we ever be weary of it? What have we ſeen among the other Nations, ſo often unhappy, ſo frequently ravag'd amidſt their Pomp, ſo often diſunited among themſelves, thro' their nice Improvements, and their oblique Manners, that can have rais'd in us the Deſire of imitating them? How comes it to paſs, that we have drawn out for ourſelves a Plan, which we can never be able to fill, and ſtill far leſs able to maintain; a Plan which, even if we could fill and maintain it, would for ever render us ridiculous? How can People of rational Underſtanding reconcile themſelves to a little fooliſh Pageantry, ill ſuiting their Circumſtances, and which ſerves only as a Blemiſh upon their Character; a few gaudy outward Appearances, which are maintain'd by Avarice or ſordid Penury alone, not unlike that Lamp, which with the ſtinking filthy Oyl it contains, infects the Apartment it ſhould illuminate? After having been vanquiſh'd by foreign Manners, to oppoſe which depends upon ourſelves, and after having join'd to thoſe Manners others ſtill more pernicious, which our own Corruption, arriv'd to the higheſt Degree, has produc'd, it is to be fear'd that, in other Reſpects,

Reſpects, we may experience the Fate of thoſe foreign Nations, whoſe Spectators we ſo long have been, and in our Turn become a Spectacle for them to gaze at. Some of our Predeceſſors, Perſons of Judgment and Penetration, when they firſt obſerv'd foreign Cuſtoms introduc'd among us, and the Luxury and licentious Lives of our Youth, evidently foreſaw the Nation's Ruin, and even preſag'd it from the firſt Moment: And the Judicious of theſe our Days, beholding all thoſe Nuiſances brought to the higheſt Pitch they can poſſibly arrive at, call to Mind thoſe Preſages, and cannot but apprehend our Downfal to be near at Hand. Some among them have had melancholy Reaſons for ſuch Apprehenſions. Dear, Sir, I cordially embrace you, and am, *&c.*

LETTER VII.

SINCE my laſt Letter to you, with which I thought to have finiſh'd what I had to ſay concerning the *French* Nation; (*n*) ſomething has happen'd which gives Room for another Letter. The Adventure muſt not be reckon'd among the moſt memorable Occurrences; But a Traveller who ſets himſelf to write, lays hold of every Handle he meets with. The Story is this: We came from *Paris*, to *Lyons*, in the Flying-Coach, in Company with an *Abbé*, who paſs'd for a Wit, and ſome Merchants. Monſieur *L'Abbé*, was reading *Boileau*'s Satyrs. The Merchants liſten'd to him with great Attention and Admiration. Mr. —— and myſelf, whom the reſt of the Company took to be *Engliſhmen*, only liſten'd, but ſpoke not a Word.

At the firſt Stage, the *Abbé*, not being able any longer to bear with our Silence, aſk'd us if we had ever read that Poet's Works, what we thought of them, and if we had any Thing as good in our own Country. We anſwer'd that we had read them, and that with Pleaſure, as one of the celebrated Works of our Times; that we found more Good than Bad in them; but that we were, however, of Opinion, that ſome *Engliſh* Poets had in Point of Genius the Advantage over him. He did not ſeem to be any way pleas'd with this; and having for a Moment

(*n*) *This is not a Fiction: The Thing happen'd as it is related, and occaſion'd the writing this Letter.*

ment or two turn'd over the Book, he preſented it open to us, ſaying, with a ſneering Smile: *You are come from* Paris, *Gentlemen, here's a Satyr on that Town. Will you be pleas'd to ſhew us what you find good or bad in it?* We did not expect a Propoſal of this Nature; but having nothing better on our Hands, we accepted of it, as an Amuſement that came in the Way. The Satyr was criticiz'd, and I had a Mind to put our Criticiſm in writing, to ſend it to you. It may ſerve as an Amuſement to you for half an Hour, and to me during the leiſure Time I ſhall have the two or three Days I am oblig'd to ſtay in this Place. That alone would not have been ſufficient to make me write it; but after having entertain'd you in my Letters with the Character and Wit of the *French*, I thought the Rehearſal of this Criticiſm, which has ſome Relation to thoſe Things, might well follow them. It regards an Author who is not only a Wit, but in ſome Reſpect regulates the Wit of others, and I own, I would look upon it as a Favour, if I were allow'd to carve Wit for myſelf, when I ſhould happen to be merrily diſpoſed, without another's propoſing any Thing to me on that Head.

If it be true that we cannot have Wit, as theſe Gentlemen pretend, they muſt expect to ſee us take the ſame Reſolution which People generally do on like Occaſions, and which the Philoſophers took formerly with Regard to Riches; that is, to give out, that we deſpiſe what we want; to maintain that they are pernicious, and eſpecially to cry out vehemently againſt thoſe who are poſſeſs'd of them. Here you have all the Satyr, becauſe it was all criticis'd; and becauſe that, in order to judge well of any Performance, it is requiſite that the whole Piece ſhould be expos'd to View.

SATIRE VI.

DE Mr. D***.

Qui frappe l'air, bon Dieu! de ces lugubres cris,
Eſt-ce donc pour veiller qu'on ſe couche à Paris?

Voilà de grandes Exclamations. Elles ne conviennent peut-être pas trop bien à un Début, qui a bonne grace d' être ſimple. Mais elles conviennent à la Satire, & au ſujet que le Poëte s'eſt choiſi; car à Paris il y a peu de Nuits où il n'arrive quelque triſte Evenement.

Et quel facheux Dæmon, durant les nuits entieres,
Raſſemble ici les Chats de toutes les goutieres?

Ce n'eſt pas à cette chûte que le Lecteur s'attend, & ces *Chats*, *raſſemblez* par un *Dæmon*, ne doivent pas trouver ici leur place.

J'ai beau ſauter du lit plein de trouble & d'effroi,
Je penſe qu'avec eux tout l'Enfer eſt chez moi;
L'un miaule en grondant comme un tigre en furie,
L'autre roule ſa voix comme un Enfant qui crie.

Ces Chats reſſemblent aux Chats de tout Païs, c'eſt ce que leur Deſcription nous aprend. Du reſte, ces derniers vers ſont bons, & peignent bien la choſe.

BOILEAU's *Sixth Satyr Criticis'd.*

What Noiſe is this? Good God! What doleful Cries
Aſſault my Ears, and keep unſhut my Eyes?
What ſpiteful Goblin does this Clamour make?
Do Men at *Paris* go to Bed to wake?

Theſe are thundering Exclamations. They may not, perhaps, be over and above ſuitable for an *Exordium*, which would have a better Grace were it ſimple. But they agree very well with Satyr, and with the Subject our Poet has choſen; for at *Paris* few Nights paſs without ſome diſaſtrous Accident.

The caterwauling Cats in Garret groul,
Worſe than Cur-Dogs a-nights in Hamlets houl

It is not this Fall, this Cadence that the Reader expects; nor are theſe Cats, (*o*) *aſſembled by a Goblin*, worthy to be introduc'd here.

Diſturb'd and terrify'd, in vain I rouze;
It rattles as if Hell was in the Houſe:
One grumbles like a Tyger here; and there
One like a ſquawling Brat, torments my Ear.

Theſe Cats are like the Cats every where elſe; and this we are taught by the Deſcription here given us. As to the reſt, theſe laſt Verſes are good, and paint out the Thing very well.

This

(*o*) *Here, as well as in many other Places, I muſt ſend my Reader to the Original, which is very different from the Tranſlation.*

Ce n'eſt pas tout encore. Les Souris & les Rats,
Semblent, pour m'éveiller, s'entendre avec les Chats;

C'eſt encore tout comme ailleurs; on ne reconnoit juſques ici, ni une grande Ville, ni un grand Poëte, & tout cela tient plus du Comique que du Satirique.

Plus importuns pour moi, durant la nuit obſcure,
Que jamais, en plein jour, ne fut l'Abbé de P——

Voila apparemment de l'Eſprit, ou une Penſée vive qui doit relever le reſte. Il faut, en ce cas là, qu'il y ait du miſtere là deſſous, quelque raport cachè entre l'importunité que peut cauſer cet *Abbé*, & celle que cauſe le bruit des *Souris* & des *Chats*. Hors de là, ce trait n'a que de malignité, & la malignité, lors-qu'elle n'eſt pas tournée contre le Mauvais, eſt mauvaiſe elle même, dans la Satire auſſi-bien qu'ailleurs, & ce n'eſt jamais ce qui embellit une Piece de Poëſie. Ces petits traits à quoi on ne s'attend point, donnent plûtôt l'idée d'un Satire qui heurte ou qui ruë, que d'un Satire qui ſe jouë.

Tout conſpire à la fois à troubler mon repos;
Et je me plains ici du moindre de mes maux.

C'eſt-à-dire, que nous allons entendre des choſes plus terribles, que celles qui lui ont fait croire *tout l'Enfer chez lui.*

Car

This is not all my Curſe; the Mice and Rats
To wake me ſeem in Conſort with the Cats.

All this is ſtill the very ſame as in other Places; we have not hitherto the leaſt Idea either of a great City, or a great Poet: All we have yet met with ſavours rather of Comedy than Satyr.

As ill I can, by Night, this Plague endure,
As e'er I could, by Day, *l'Abbé de Pure.*

This carries a Face of Wit with it, and is ſeemingly a ſprightly Thought which ſhould heighten and enliven the reſt. In this Caſe, there muſt of Neceſſity lie ſome Myſtery at Bottom, ſome unaccountable Affinity between the Diſturbance this *Abbé* might occaſion where he came, and that which the Noiſe of the Mice and Cats gives. Laying aſide that, this Stroke has nothing in it but downright ſcurrilous Malignity, which, when not pointed againſt what is eſſentially bad, is inexcuſable, as well in Satyr as elſewhere, and is what never embelliſhes a Piece of Poeſy. Theſe vulgar, mean, unlook'd for Strokes, give us rather the Idea of a ruffianly Satyr, that ruſhes in to knock out ones Brains, than of one ſporting with us for a little Diverſion.

All Things at once conſpire to break my Reſt,
And that which I lament, diſturbs me leaſt.

That is to ſay, that we are about to hear of Things ſtill more terrible than thoſe which made him fancy that *Hell was in the Houſe.*

No

Car à peine les Coqs, commençant leur ramage
Auront de Cris aigus frappé le voiſinage,
Qu'un affreux Serrurier, que le Ciel en courroux,
A fait pour mes péchez trop voiſion de chez nous;
Avec un fer maudit, qu'à grand bruit il apprête,
De cent coups de marteau me va fendre la tête.

Le Genie de la Satire devoit engager le Poëte à nous donner une deſcription des Deſordres de Paris. Car la Satire doit corriger les hommes de leur Corruption, ou comme les Habiles gens s'expriment là deſſus, c'eſt un (*p*) *Ouvrage fait pour reprendre, pour cenſurer les Vices, les Paſſions déreglées, les Sotiſes, les Impertinences des Hommes*; cependant juſques ici, nous ne voyons rien qui réponde á cette Idée. Le Poëte s'attache plûtôt à cenſurer les Animaux, ou la Nature qui leur a donné des qualitez incommodes, & ce qu'il dit lá deſſus, peut ſe dire du moindre Village auſſi bien que de Paris, & mieux encore. Surtout les *Cris aigus*, qu'il apelle *Ramage*, ſe font plus entendre à la Campagne qu'à la Ville. Son chagrin contre le *Serrurier* a le même défaut que la cenſure des Animaux: il retombe ſur la Nature qui a diſpoſé les choſes de maniere qu'il faut de Serruriers, des gens faits comme celui qu'il dépeint ici,

&

(*p*) Voyez le *Dictionaire de l'Académie Françoiſe* ſur le mot de *Satire*.

No ſooner the ſhrill Cock his Mattins crows,
Than the Smith riſes, and his Hammer goes:
Heav'n for my Sins has poſted him ſo near,
That on his Anvil every Thump I hear;
It tears my Brains, and every dreadful Sound
Makes in my Head a terrible Rebound.

The Genius of Satyr ſhould have engag'd our Poet to have given us a Deſcription of the Diſorders of *Paris*. For Satyr ought to correct Man's Corruption, or as the *Virtuoſi* expreſs themſelves thereon, *It is* (p) *a Work compos'd in order to reprehend, to cenſure the Vices, the irregular Paſſions, the Follies, and the Impertinence of Mankind:* Nevertheleſs, we hitherto meet with nothing in the leaſt anſwerable to that Idea. The Poet rather dwells upon cenſuring irrational Creatures, or Nature which has given them troubleſome Qualities, and what he ſays upon that Subject may be ſaid of the moſt inconſiderable Hamlet, as well as of *Paris*, and with ſtill more Reaſon. More eſpecially the ſhrill Cries [*cris aigus*] (of the Cocks) which he calls (q) *Ramage* [chirping, *&c.* of little Birds] are more to be heard in the Country than in Town. His Spleen againſt the poor (r) Smith is no leſs faulty than his cenſuring the irrational Creatures: He again falls foul upon Nature, which has ſo diſpos'd Things that there is a Neceſſity for Smiths, People of the very Stamp he here deſcribes,

(p) *See the Dictionary of the* French *Academy; on the Word* Satire.

(q) *See the* French; *the* Engliſh *Editor uſing a different Turn.*

(r) Serrurier; *a Lock-Smith.*

& contre qui il n'y a rien à dire. Ce n'eſt pas le chagrin du Poëte contre ce qui l'incommode, qui mérite d'être raconté au Public, mais le mal qui ſe trouve dans ce qui le chagrine ; c'eſt là ce qui fait la beauté d'une Satire. Mais, ſur-tout, il a tort en ce que pour ſi peu de choſe, pour le *bruit* que peut faire un *Serrurier* dans le *Voiſinage*, il fait intervenir le *Courroux du Ciel*. On auroit déja pû lui reprocher ſur ce pied là le début de cette Piece, où il s'adreſſe au *Bon Dieu* mal à propos. Il vaudroit mieux tourner l'Eſprit de Satire contre de pareilles manieres de parler, que de les autoriſer en les emploiant dans un Poëme Satirique. Elles ne ſont bien nulle part, mais dans la Poëſie encore moins que dans la Proſe, & ce n'eſt que faute de Genie qu'un Poëte y a recours. A parler naturellement, cette Satire, ou cette Piece de Poëſie, car on ne ſait au juſte ce que c'eſt, juſques ici eſt très peu de choſe. Mais peut être que la Poëſie, comme un genre d'écrire particulier, & voüè principalement à l'Harmonie, a quelque choſe de privilegié, & qu'au lieu de reconnoitre le ſimple Bon-ſens pour Juge, elle a ſon propre Tribunal où l'Oreille prèſide. En ce cas-là, il y auroit de la témerité à nous de juger de cette Piéce comme nous faiſons, & ce n'eſt qu'entant que nous la ſupoſons ſujette a Bon-ſens, que nous nous hazardons d'en dire nôtre penſée.

J'entens

deſcribes, and againſt whom nothing ſhould be ſaid. It is not the Poet's Spleen againſt that which diſturbs him that merits being recited to the Publick, but the Miſchief which attends the Thing that incommodes him; there lies the Beauty of a Satyr. But, more than all the reſt, he is in the Wrong, for ſo trifling an Occaſion as the Noiſe a Smith could make in the Neighbourhood, to bring in *les Courroux du Ciel.* [the Wrath of Heaven.] One might before have reproach'd him for that, when in the very firſt Line of this Piece, he, ſo *mal a propos*, addreſſes himſelf to the *Good God.* It would be much better to point the Sting of Satyr againſt ſuch Expreſſions, than to authorize them by making Uſe of them in a Satyrick Poem. They are far from being commendable any where; but in Poetry ſtill leſs than in Proſe; and it is merely for want of Genius that a Poet ever has Recourſe to them. To ſpeak naturally, this Satyr, or this Piece of Poetry, for one does not juſtly know what it is, thus far is really very little or nothing. But perhaps Poetry, as a particular Manner of Writing, and dedicated chiefly to Harmony, has a peculiar Privilege, and inſtead of acknowledging ſimple Good Senſe for its Judge, has its own peculiar Tribunal, at which the Ear ſits Preſident. In this Caſe, it would be Temerity in us to judge of this Piece as we do, and it is only on Account of our preſuming it to be obnoxious to Good Senſe, that we venture to give our Sentiments of it.

Now

J'entens déja par tout les charettes courir,
Les Maçons travailler, les Boutiques s'ouvrir :

Ces deux vers ſont bons en ce qu'ils ſont ſimples, & qu'ils donnent une idée de ce qui ſe paſſe à Paris à la pointe du jour. Du reſte ils ont le défaut des précedens ; ce n'eſt pas un Abus qu'ils attaquent ; ce ne ſont point les vers d'une Satire. Si le Poëte continuë ainſi, ce n'eſt plus ſur le pied de Satire qu'il faudra examiner cette Piéce, mais ſur celui d'une Deſcription du Bruit & des Incommoditez de Paris.

Tandis que dans les airs mille cloches émuës,
D'un funebre Concert ſont retentir les nuës,
Et ſe mêlant au bruit de la grêle & des vents,
Pour honorer les Morts, font mourir les Vivans.

La deſcription du bruit des *Cloches* eſt bonne, ſupoſé qu'il ſoit ſi grand à Paris que le Poëte ait raiſon de relever. Du reſte, Paris n'eſt pas autrement dans un Païs de *Grêle* & de *Vents*, & la Grêle ſur tout ſemble être ici de trop. Mais quand même il y grêleroit plus ſouvent, le bruit des Cloches eſt un très petit inconvenient au prix d'un grand Orage ; cependant, c'eſt ce petit bruit, ce *Concert*, comme il l'apelle, qui fait ici le grand mal,

Now Carts and Coaches run along the Streets,
And next my Ear the Mason's Musick greets;
Now Doors unlock'd on rusty Hinges jar,
And opening Shops expose deceitful Ware.

These Verses are good, because they are plain and simple, and give an Idea of what passes early in the Morning at *Paris*. As to the rest, they have the same Defects as those which precede them: It is not an Abuse they are attacking; these are not Satyrick Lines. If the Poet holds on thus, this Piece must not be examin'd on the Footing of a Satyr, but upon that of a Description of the Noise and Incommodities of *Paris*.

Now Clocks and Cries a horrid Consort make,
And snoring Priests for hated Duties wake:
Now in the neighb'ring Tow'rs the crazy Bells
By drunken Sextons ring departing Knells;
The troubled Air they with Confusion fill,
To compliment the Dead, the Living kill;
While Storms of Hail upon the Windows beat,
And various Discords in one Chaos meet.

The Description of the Noise of the Bells is good, supposing it to be so very excessive at *Paris* that the Poet has Cause to make such a Bustle about it. As to the rest, *Paris* does not stand in a Country of Hail and Winds; and the Hail, more especially, seems to be superfluous. But even if it hail'd there oftener, the Jangling of Bells is a very small Inconveniency compar'd with a great Storm; nevertheless, it is this *hor-*

mal, & que dès là il n'étoit point néceſſaire de faire accompagner de la Grêle & des Vents. La vèritè eſt qu'il faloit une rime à *Vivans*, où le Poëte en vouloit venir ; les *Vents* ſont bons à cela, & voilà l'origine de cette Tempête. Elle devoit renforcer le bruit des Cloches pour lui aider à produire une Pointe d'eſprit, s'il eſt vrai, du moins, qu'il y ait de l'Eſprit à ètendre ce bruit juſques à faire *mourir* les gens.

Encore je benirois la bontè ſouveraine,
Si le Ciel à ces maux avoit bornè ma peine.

La *Bontè ſouveraine* & le *Ceil*, ſont ici prèciſement la même choſe, ainſi l'un eſt de trop ; ou plutôt ils ſont de trop tous deux ; le ſujet eſt trop petit pour remonter juſques là, & il ne faudroit jamais ſe ſervir de pareilles expreſſions que ſérieuſement & avec dignité. Le Poëte donne ſouvent lieu dans cette Piece à lui faire ce reproche : cela ne lui fait pas honneur.

Mais ſi ſeul en mon lit je peſte avec raiſon,
C'eſt encor pis vingt fois en quittant la maiſon.

Ces deux vers ſont très peu de choſe ; le premier, ſur tout, ne dit rien, & les Expreſſions, ſi nôtre critique

rid Noiſe, this *Conſort*, as he terms it, that here does ſo much Miſchief, for which Reaſon there was no Occaſion to accompany it with Hail and Winds. The whole Truth is, a Rhime was wanting to (*s*) *vivans*, [the Living] to which Word the Poet wanted to ſteer his Courſe; *les Vents* [the Winds] hit it exactly, and there's the Origin of this Tempeſt. It ſhould have heighten'd the Tintamarre of the Bells, to have aſſiſted the Poet in the Production of a Turn of Wit, if it is true that there lies any Wit in extending this Noiſe ſo far as to make it *kill* Folks.

(*t*) But this is nothing to the Plagues to come,
'Twere well if I had known the worſt at home.

The *Supreme Clemency*, and *Heaven*, [introduced in the Original] mean, in this Place, preciſely one and the ſame Thing, ſo that one of them is certainly ſuperfluous; or rather they are both ſo: The Subject is too mean for ſuch high Flights; nor ought Expreſſions of that Nature to be ever us'd but in very ſublime and ſerious Matters. The Poet, in this Performance, gives frequent Room for this Reproach; nor is his ſo doing much to his Credit.

A-Bed if I could not forbear to curſe,
How ſhould I in the Street? For there 'twas worſe.

(*u*) Theſe two Verſes have very little in them; the firſt, in particular ſays nothing at all, and

(*s*) *See the* French.
(*t*) *This Diſtick differs much from the* French. Vid.
(*u*) *Neither this, nor ſeveral of the enſuing Paragraphs, can well be render'd intelligible to thoſe who are wholly ignorant of* French.

critique doit s'étendre juſques là, n'en valent pas mieux que le Sens. *Peſter* en eſt une qui n'eſt rien moins que noble. Peſter *avec raiſon*, eſt plus mauvais encore ; c'eſt la Rime qui fait emploier au Poëte ces termes, & c'eſt ſur les mots qui ſont la Rime, que la critique tomberoit aſſez ſouvent, ſi on vouloit y faire attention, & lui relever de petites choſes. Mais au lieu de critiquer ſa Piéce par là, par ce qu'il peut y avoir de deſagréable ſeulement, comme on peut lui reprocher d'avoir fait la Satire de Paris, on voudroit ne lui relever que les défauts qui regardent l' Eſſential, ſi du moins il y a de l' Eſſentiel dans ſa Piece.

En quelque endroit que j'aille il faut fendre la preſſe
D'un Peuple d'Importuns qui fourmillent ſans ceſſe.

Ce dernier vers eſt ſi mèchant & ſi parfaitement inutile, que ſi cette Satire en general, ou du moins ce que nous en avons vû juſques ici, & la Rime en particulier ne le reclamoient, on le croiroit ſupoſé. C'eſt une explication du mot de *Preſſe*, qui s'explique aſſez de ſoi-même. Que ſignifie *Peuple d'Importuns ? Peuple* dit tout : *Importum* ſe dit plûtôt d'une perſonne à une autre, ou du moins il ne déſigne que ceux qui ont tort,

en

the Expreſſion, if we may carry our Criticiſm to ſuch a Length, is not a Jot better than the Senſe. PESTER [as in the Original, ſignifying to *rail*, or *ſtorm*] is an Expreſſion very far from having any thing of noble in it; and PESTER *avec raiſon* [to *ſtorm* or *curſe with reaſon*] is ſtill worſe: It is for the Rhime ſake that our Poet makes Uſe of theſe Terms, and it is upon the Words which make the Rhime, that one's Criticiſms might fall often enough, were one diſpos'd to be over exact, and take him up for Trifles. But inſtead of criticiſing this Piece of his upon that Article, where one might meet with Rhimes which carry with them only a diſagreeable Sound, as he may be reproach'd with in this his Satyr upon *Paris*, we only would remark upon the Faults which regard the Eſſential, if there be any Eſſential in the Piece.

I preſs'd, where e'er I went, from Throng to Throng,
Joſtled and ſhov'd, and ſometimes heav'd along;
The Crowd, inceſſantly, came on in Swarms,
I ſcarce had Uſe of Feet, and none of Arms.

This laſt Verſe [in the *French*] is ſo very bad, and ſo intirely uſeleſs, that if this Satyr in general, or at leaſt the Part we have already perus'd, and, in particular, the Rhime, did not lay Claim to it, one would believe it to be ſuppoſitious. It is an Explication of the Word *Preſſe*, which alone ſufficiently explains itſelf. And what does (*x*) *Peuple d'Importuns* ſignify? *Peuple* by itſelf ſays all. *Importun* is rather ſaid of one

 Perſon

(*x*) *The Salt of this whole Paragraph muſt, unavoidably, be intirely loſt to all thoſe who have not ſome Scraps of* French *to help them out.*

en incommodant quel qu' un. En quoi tous ces gens là ont-ils tort à l'égard du Poëte ? Il ſemble qu'il veuille dire, qu'ils ſortent dans la ruë pour le voir paſſer. Et *ſans ceſſe* ; qu'ajoute t-il ici à *fourmiller*, ſi ce n'eſt la Rime ? Tantôt nous avons trouvè que, juſques là, les vers de cette Satire ètoient peu de choſe. Ceux que nous avons vûs depuis ne valent pas mieux, & il eſt certain que, juſques ici, cette Pièce ne méritoit pas même d'être critiquée, ſi elle n'étoit faite par un Poëte qui a de la Reputation, & qui en a fait de meilleures.

L'un me heurte d'un ais, dont je ſuis tout froiſſé.
Je vois d'un autre coup mon chapeau renverſé.
Là d'un Enterrement la funebre ordonnance.
D'un pas lugubre & lent vers l'Egliſe s'avance :
Et plus loin des Laquais, l'un l'autre s'agaçans,
Font aboyer les chiens, & jurer les paſſans.
Des Paveurs en ce lieu me bouchent le paſſage.
Là je trouve une croix de funeſte préſage :
Et des Couvreurs, grimpez au toit d'une maiſon,
En font pleuvoir l'ardoiſe & la tuile à foiſon.

On ne ſait que dire des ces vers ; il ne ſont ni aſſez bons pour être loüez, quel que purgez d'Eſprit qu'ils ſoient, ni aſſez méchans pour être blâmez : ils peignent paſſablement bien des choſes qui ne valoient peut-être pas la peine d'être peintes.

Là ſur une charette une poutre branlante
Vient menaçant de lien la foule qu'elle augmente.
Six Chevaux, attelez à ce fardeau peſant,
Ont peine à l'émouvoir ſur le pavé gliſſant.

D'un

Perſon to another, or, at leaſt, it only means ſuch Perſons as are in the Wrong, in being troubleſome to others. In what are all theſe People in the Wrong, as the Poet pleaſes to intimate? He ſeems to hint, that they have all left their Homes purpoſely to ſtare at him. Then, this *ſans ceſſe*; what has it to do here, tack'd to *fourmiller*, but only for Rhime-ſake? A good while ago we found, that the Couplets of this Satyr had very little in them: Thoſe we have met with ſince are not a Whit better; and it is very certain, that, hitherto, this Poem would not be even worth Criticiſm, were it not the Performance of a Poet in Reputation, and who has wrote better.

Torn are my Ruffles, rumpled my Cravat,
And rudely from my Head they toſs my Hat.
Here, to'ards the Church, a pompous Funeral Show,
Advances, with a ſolemn March, and ſlow:
There Lackies fall together by the Ears,
And there ſet Dogs upon the Paſſengers:
Here Paviers ſtopping me, I'm at a Loſs;
And there I meet an ill-preſaging Croſs:
Here Tilers are at Work, and down they pour
Of Dirt, of Brick, and Tile a dangerous Show'r:

One knows not what to ſay of theſe Verſes: They are neither good enough to be commended, clean and ſmooth as they are, nor bad enough to be cry'd down: They tolerably well deſcribe Things which, perhaps, deſerve not a Deſcription.

There on a Cart, with an extended Team,
Is drawn along a huge, unweildy Beam;
The Cart the trembling Street and Houſes ſhakes,
And threatens from a far the Crowd it makes:

D'un Carroſſe en paſſant il accroche une roue,
Et du choc le renverſe en un grand tas de boue :
Quand un autre à l'inſtant, s'efforçant de paſſer,
Dans le même embarras ſe vient embarraſſer.

Tout eſt bon, à n'enviſager ce Poëme que comme la deſcription des Incommoditez d'une grande Ville. Sur ce pied là on reconnoit Paris à cette Peinture, & elle vaut encore ſon prix par la beauté des vers.

Vingt Caroſſes bien-tôt arrivent à la file,
Y ſont en moins de rien ſuivis de plus de mille :

Les *Caroſſes*, même hors des cas ſinguliers, tels que celui que le Poëte dépeint, ſont pour les Paſſans une des Incommoditez de Paris. Il ſemble qu'un Poëte Satirique auroit bonne grace de ſe jetter ici ſur le Faſte de cette grande Ville, ſur ce qu'il a d'incommode auſſi bien que de blamable d'ailleurs.

Et pour ſurcroit de maux, un Sort malencontreux
Conduit en cet endroit un grand troupeau de Bœufs.
Chacun prétend paſſer ; l'un mugit, l'autre jure.

En prenant en main une des Satires du célebre Poëte des François, nous nous attendions à critiquer des Penſées, des Cenſures trop ou trop peu ſeveres ; mais elle ne nous préſente que des Expreſſions. Ce ſont donc les Expreſſions, au cas qu'elles

Againſt a Coach it runs, and breaks a Spoke,
And overturns it with a furious Shock;
It lays it in the Dirt: Another came,
And forcing to get by, it fares the ſame.

All this is good, were this Poem to be conſider'd only as a Deſcription of the Incommodities of a great City. Taken on that Footing, this Picture gives one ſome Idea of *Paris*; nor are the Couplets themſelves without their Merit.

Theſe Coaches ſoon are follow'd by a Score,
Thoſe, in an Inſtant, by a hundred more:

The Coaches at *Paris*, even laying aſide ſingular Caſes, like this our Poet has been painting, are for Paſſengers one of the Inconveniencies of that City. Here it might ſeem, that a Satyrick Poem might, with a very good Grace, fall upon the Luxury of that great City, upon what is not only incommodious, but likewiſe blame-worthy in other Reſpects.

And, as ill Luck wou'd have it, in the Nick,
The Stop ſo lengthen'd, and the Crowd ſo thick,
A Drove of Oxen in the Street appears;
Each ſtrives to paſs; one lows, another ſwears:

In taking in Hand a Satyr of one of the moſt celebrated Poets of *France*, we expected to have criticis'd upon the Thoughts, the too ſevere or too favourable Cenſures; but it only preſents Expreſſions. It is, therefore, upon the Expreſſions,

qu'elles manquent de juſteſſe, qu'il nous reſte à critiquer ; c'eſt à dire, qu'il faudra nous réſoudre à faire ſur une Piece qui n'eſt guere bonne, une Critique de peu de valeur. Sur ce pied là nous dirons, que de peu de la maniere dont ceci eſt exprimé il ſemble qu'à Paris ce ſoient les *Bœufs* qu'on entende, les *uns mugir* & les *autres jurer*. Ou, ſi cela eſt dit des Hommes, que le mot de *chacun* doit déſigner, l'inconvenient de les faire *mugir* ne ſera pas moins grand que celui defaire *jurer* les Bœufs. Eſt-ce donc là ce Poëte ſi exact, ſi ſcrupuleux dans le Langage, *que ſon Eſprit tremblant ſur le choix de ſes Mots, n'en dira jamais un, s'il ne tombe à propos ?*

Des Mulets en ſonnant augmentent le murmure,

Le bruit de quelques clochettes doit être compté pour peu de choſe parmi ce Tumulte, qui, en faveur de ces clochettes, & afin qu'on les entende, devient un *murmure*. Ici encore, comme au vers précedent, la critique tombe ſur le Mot qui fait la Rime.

Et bien tôt cent Chevaux dans la foule appellez,
De l'embarras qui croit ferment les défilez.

A Paris comme ailleurs, les *Chevaux* ſe trouvent engagez dans la *foule* par rencontre, & ſans que perſonne les y demande. C'eſt le Poëte qui les

Expreſſions, in Caſe they want Juſtneſs, that we are to criticiſe; which is to ſay, that we muſt reſolve with ourſelves to make, upon a Piece of very little Value, a Criticiſm worth very little. Upon this Footing, we ſhall ſay, that after the Manner theſe laſt Lines are expreſs'd, it ſeems, that at *Paris* it is to be underſtood of the Oxen, that one *lows* and another *ſwears*. Or, in Caſe that is ſaid of the Men, which the Word *each* ought to imply, the Inconveniency of making them *low* would be nothing leſs than that of making the Oxen *ſwear*. Is this, then, that Poet ſo exact, ſo ſcrupulous in Point of Diction, that, *his Mind trembling upon the Choice of his Words, would never utter one, but what fell pat to the Purpoſe!*

The Noiſe of Mules the horrid Din increaſe;

The Noiſe of a few little Bells [carried by Mules] might be reckon'd a trifling Matter amidſt all this Tumult, which, in Favour to theſe Mules Bells, and to make them to be heard, dwindles into a (y) *Murmur*. Here, as well as in the immediately preceding Verſe, the Criticiſm falls upon the Word that makes the Rhime.

And ſtrait a hundred Horſe augment the Preſs;
The Defilees of the Confuſion cloſe,
Surround the Crowd, and more confus'd it grows:

At *Paris*, as in other Places, Horſes ſometimes happen to be mix'd among a Crowd of People, by mere Accident, without being (z) *call'd*

(y) *See the* French.
(z) *See the* French.

les *apelle* pour rimer à *defilez*. Il bronche trop ſouvent au bout du vers ; & c'eſt là une remarque fâcheuſe pour un Ouvrage de Poëſie, qui doit tirer en partie ſa Beauté, d'une Rime naturelle, & qui ne ſoit nullement affectée. Mais peut-être que dans ces vers encore, il y a du miſtere qui nous paſſe, & que les *Chevaux appellez*, auſſi-bien que les *Bœufs* qui *jurent*, ſont de ces endroits ou le Poëte aux *Saumaiſes futurs prépare des tortures.*

Et par tout des Paſſans enchainant les brigades
Au milieu de la paix font voir les barricades.
On n'entend que des cris pouſſez confuſement.
Dieu pour s'y faire oüir, tonneroit vainement.

On entend les Clochettes des Mulets à un point qu'elles augmentent même le bruit, ou du moins, on entend les *cris* des hommes, & *Dieu* en *tonnant*, ne viendroit pas à bout deſe *faire entendre ?* Voilà aparement de l'Eſprit : l'envie d'en faire voir, ou de s'éloigner du Simple, fait dire quelquefois de grandes niaiſeries : & s'il faut, à l'exemple du Poëte, apeller chaque choſe par ſon nom, & n'avoir d'égard à la Reputation d'un fameux Auteur, nous dirons que la liberté qu'on ſe donne de parler de la Divinité mal à propos & ſans reſpect, conduit inſenſiblement à dire de grandes ſotiſes. Celle-ci en eſt une qui ſent plus le Corps de-garde que

call'd thither by any Body. It is the Poet *calls* them, to make out a Rhime to *Deſilez*. He ſtumbles too often at the End of the Verſe; and that is a very unlucky Omen in a Piece of Poetry, whoſe Beauty ought to conſiſt in an eaſy natural Rhime, nothing ſtiff or affected. But, perhaps, in theſe Verſes, as well as in ſeveral others, there lies a Myſtery which ſurpaſſes our Comprehenſion; and it may be, that theſe *Horſes call'd in*, as well as the *ſwearing Oxen*, are of thoſe particular Paſſages where the Poet *aux ſaumaiſes futurs prepare des tortures.*

Chain in the Paſſengers by firm Brigades,
And ſhew in midſt of Peace the Barricades;
Nothing but one continual Cry was heard,
Heav'n thunder'd, but his Thunders were not fear'd;
And none his Voice (to Dæmons dreadful) mind,
Before no Paſſage, no Retreat behind,
Still crowding, as they crowd they faſter bind.

The Mules Bells are heard, and that to ſuch a Point as, it ſeems, they even increas'd the Din, or, at leaſt, the Voices of Men bawling out were diſtinctly heard; but *Heaven's (a) Thunder* could not, by any Means, make itſelf audible. Here's clean Wit for you! The Ambition of making People think one has Wit, or to avoid being thought ſimple, ſometimes induces one to make Uſe of very ſilly Expreſſions; and if, after our Poet's Example, we muſt call every Thing by its right Name, and have no Regard to the Reputation of a famous Author, we would ſay, that the Liberty Folks

(a) *Here the* Engliſh *differs very much.* Vide.

que le Parnaſſe, & je doute qu'il s'en trouve de plus grandes dans les Ouvrages des Ecrivains, qu'il apelle ſi ſouvent des Sots.

Moi donc, qui dois ſouvent en certain lieu me rendre,
Le jour déja baiſſant, & qui ſuis las d'attendre,
Ne ſachant plus tantôt à quel Saint me voüer,
Je me mets au hazard de me faire roüer.

Puis-que le Poëte parle de *Dieu* cavalierement & ſans reſpect, il ne faut pas attendre de lui qu'il reſpecte les *Saints*, ainſi il ne faut pas lui relever cette maniere de parler proverbiale & baſſe, du moins par l'abus qu'il en fait. Au reſte, on ſeroit tenté de dire, qu'il ne ſait plus à quel Saint ſe voüer, pour continuer ſon chemin; car il n'y a nul raport entre le premier & le ſecond de ces quatre vers, entre la néceſſité de ſe rendre *ſouvent* en certain lieu, & le jour qui baiſſe *deja*. Ce *qui ſuis las d'attendre* eſt encore quelque choſe de bien froid

à la

Folks give themſelves of talking *mal a propos* and diſreſpectly of the Deity, inſenſibly leads them to utter very great Abſurdities. This we are now about, is one that ſavours more of the Guard-Room than of *Parnaſſus*; and I am in Doubt, whether our Poet ever met with any Thing worſe, in the Works of thoſe Writers whom he ſo often calls Blockheads.

But I, who had an Aſſignation made,
Was with moſt Pain, and moſt Impatience ſtay'd;
As well affraid that I might come too late,
As weary in ſo curſt a Place to wait;
Not knowing to what Saint my Vows to pay,
I ventur'd every thing to make my Way;
I ran in Danger of the Wheel to ſcape,

Since the Poet talks of God *en Cavalier*, and without Reſpect, it muſt not be expected from him, that he ſhould ſhew much Reverence to the Saints; ſo he is not to be reprimanded for that low and proverbial Manner of ſpeaking, otherwiſe than for the Abuſe he makes of it. As to the reſt, one might be tempted to think, that he *knows not to what Saint to pay his Vows*, in order to continue his Way: For there is not the leaſt Connexion between the firſt and the ſecond of theſe four Verſes [in the *French*. Vide.] between *(b)* the Neceſſity he lies under of rendering himſelf *often* in a certain Place, and the Sun which is *already going down*. Then this *qui ſuis las d'attendre* [who am weary of waiting) of his, has ſomething in it extremely cold, after all that Tumult he had been deſcribing; and

(*b*) *This in* Engliſh *cannot be render'd intelligible, the Terms being merely* French.

à la ſuite du Tumulte qu'il a dépeint, & le *hazard* où il ſe met de *ſe faire roüer*, doit avoir auſſi une cauſe plus forte que cet Ennui.

Je ſaute vingt ruiſſeaux, j'eſquive, je me pouſſe:
Guenaud ſur ſon cheval en paſſant m'éclabouſſe.

Comme ce Poëte, d'un côté, néglige de blamer ce qu'il y auroit à blamer à Paris, & de donner de la dignité à ſon Poëme, de l'autre il va chercher de petites circonſtances qui ne valoient pas la peine d'être relevées, & nomme les gens par leur nom, ce qui a toujours quelque choſe d'odieux. A la vérité il ne fait pas grand mal à *Guenaud*, en diſant qu'il en eſt *éclabouſſé*; mais cela n'empêche pas qu'il n'ait tort de le nommer, pour lui donner mal à propos une eſpece de ridicule. On pourroit dire, que c'eſt le Poëte qui, en chemin faiſant, ſe plait à mettre le pied dans la bouë, & à éclabouſſer les Paſſans.

Et n'oſant plus paroitre en l'état où je ſuis.
Sans ſonger où je vais, me ſauve où je puis.

Deux vers ſimples, qui viennent bien à la ſuite des précedens, & qui ſont bons par là.

Tandis

and *the Danger of the Wheel* he *runs*, ought, likewiſe, to have had a ſtronger Reaſon than this Inconveniency.

And twenty Kennels was oblig'd to leap;
I ſqueez'd and ſhov'd, but ſtill 'twas worſe and worſe,
For now I met with *Guenaud* and his Horſe;
The Water on my Face, and Cloaths was daſh'd,
And I, with Dirt, from Top to Toe was ſplaſh'd:

As this Poet, on one Side, neglects finding Fault with what is really to be found Fault with at *Paris*, and giving Dignity to his Poem, on the other Side, he rummages for little trifling Circumſtances not worth the Pains of taking Notice of, and names People by their Names, which has always ſomething in it very odious. The Truth is, he does not any great Injury to *Guenaud*, in ſaying he was *ſplaſh'd* by him; but that is no Argument of his not being to blame for naming him, and wrongfully making him, in ſome Meaſure, ridiculous. One would be inclin'd to ſay, that it was the Poet himſelf, who, as he went along, took Delight in thruſting his Foot into the Mire, and ſplaſhing the Paſſengers.

Nor daring in that Pickle to appear,
I labour'd to get out, and car'd not where;

Two plain Verſes, which come ſutably enough at the Hells of thoſe that precede them, and on that Score are not altogether deſpicable.

Tandis que dans un coin en grondant je m'eſſuie,
Souvent pour m'achever il ſurvient une Pluie,
On diroit que le Ciel qui ſe fond tout en eau,
Veuille innonder ces lieux d'un Déluge nouveau.

Ces vers ſont bons, ſupoſé qu'à Paris il *pleuve* plus ſouvent qu'ailleurs, & que les Pluies y ſoient plus abondantes. Hors de là cette Pluie, quelque bien décrite qu'elle ſoit, pourroit bien être ici de trop. On diroit que D***. le ſpirituel D***, ainſi que les hommes du commun, ſe trove reduit à parler du Tems, des Vents & de la Pluie, pour ſe tirer d'affaire.

Pour traverſer la rue, au milieu de l'Orage,
Un ais ſur deux pavés former un étroit paſſage.
Le plus hardi Laquais n'y marche qu'en tremblant.
Il faut pourtant paſſer ſur ce pont chancelant.

Nous compterons ces vers parmi les bons : ils décrivent un inconvenient de Paris, & le décrivent bien. Mais que ne ſaute-t-il ce Ruiſſeau, comme il a ſauté les vingt autres ? En voici la raiſon, qui commence par un *Et* ; & non pas par un *Car*, comme les raiſons ordinaires.

Et

While grumbling in the Corner of a Street,
I ſtay'd to clean the Dirt, and dry the Wet.
Thus poſted, thus employ'd, while I remain'd,
To plague me worſe, if poſſible, it rain'd,
And pour'd as if the Skies were to be drain'd;
As if another Flood would fall to drown
The Place, and to a Sea convert the Town.

Theſe Verſes are good, ſuppoſing that it rain'd oftener at *Paris* than elſewhere, and the Rains there were more exceſſive: Otherwiſe this Shower of Rain, how well ſoever it may have been deſcrib'd, may very well be here look'd upon as ſuperfluous. It induces one to think, that Monſieur *Boileau*, the bright, the witty *Boileau*, as well as other Men of an ordinary Genius, finds himſelf reduc'd to bring in Storms and Rain to extricate him from a Nonplus.

To croſs the Street, the Waters riſing high,
Slight Boards a-thwart the flowing Kennels lie:
The boldeſt Lackey trembled when he paſs'd,
And the moſt haſty there forgot his Haſte:
Like others, I the tottering Plank muſt paſs,
Or ſtay, and ſtill be wetter where I was.

We'll reckon theſe Verſes among the good ones: They deſcribe an Inconveniency of *Paris*, and deſcribe it well. But, why does he not *leap* this Kennel, as he *leap'd* the *twenty* others? Here follows the Reaſon, which [in the *French*. Vide.] begins with an *Et*, [*And*] and not with a *Car*, [*For*] like other ordinary Reaſons.

Et les nombreux Torrens qui tombent des goutieres,
Groſſiſſant les Ruiſſeaux, en ont fait des Rivieres.

L'eau qui tombe abondamment des Goutieres pourroit bien dans la Poëſie former des Torrents, mais non des *Torrens* qui *groſſiſſent les Ruiſſeaux & en font des Rivieres.* Cette gradation repreſente l'Ordre de la Nature, & alors ces Torrens poëtiques n'ont plus lieu. A cela près ces vers ſont beaux, l'on ne ſauroit mieux décrire ce qui ſe paſſe à Paris dans le tems des grandes Pluies. Au reſte, s'il eſt permis de deviner, en paſſant, pourquoi, aux dépens du Bon-ſens, le *Car* par où ils devoient commencer ſe trouve changé en un *Et*; c'eſt, je penſe qu'un ſecond *Car* le ſuivoit de trop ptès, & que l'oreille délicate du François ne ſauroit ſuporter deux *Car* ſi près l'un de l'autre.

J'y paſſe en trébuchant; mais malgré l'embarras,
La fraïeur de la Nuit précipite mes pas.

Ces vers encore ſont bons; ils achevent de peindre l'incommodité des ruës de Paris inondées.

Car ſi-tôt que du ſoir les Ombres pacifiques,
D'un double cadenat font fermer les Boutiques,
Que retiré chez lui, le paiſible Marchand,
Va revoir ſes billets, & compter ſon argent;
Que dans le Marché-neuf tout eſt calme & tranquille,
Les voleurs à l'inſtant s'emparent de la Ville.

Cette

The Waters, which from Spouts in Torrents fell,
To Rivers ſoon the roaring Kennels ſwell.

The Waters which fall in abundance from Spouts, may, in Poeſy, very well form *Torrents*; But not *Torrents* which *ſwell* Kennels ſo very much as to make *Rivers* of them. This Gradation repreſents the Order of Nature, and then theſe Poetick *Torrents* take Place no longer. This excepted, theſe Verſes are good; nor can what paſſes at *Paris*, in great Rains, be better deſcrib'd. As to the reſt, if, *en paſſant*, we may have Leave to gueſs, why, repugnant to good Senſe, the *For*, with which they ought to begin, is transform'd into an *And*; it is, I fancy, becauſe a ſecond *For* follows it too cloſe at the Heels, and becauſe the delicate Ears of the *French* are not able to bear with two *For's* ſo near each other.

I tripp'd in paſſing, but approaching Night
Quicken'd my Speed as it increas'd my Fright.

Theſe Verſes are, likewiſe, good; they compleat the Deſcription of the Incommodity of the Streets of *Paris*, when over-flown with great Rains.

For when the peaceful Shades the Skies obſcure,
And Shops are ſhut, and Chains defend the Door;
When o'er his Bags the glad Mechanick looks,
His Bills examines, and his guilty Books;
When ev'ry Thing at the *Marché-Neuf's* in Peace,
Then the Thieves ſally, and the City ſieze:

Cette Deſcription encore eſt belle, & l'on y reconnoit Paris. Mais la circonſtance de la *tranquillité du Marché-neuf* a quelque choſe de petit, & ne rencherit point ſur les *Boutiques fermées* & ſur le *Marchand retiré* ; & le dernier vers, qui d'ailleurs ſeroit très bon, a le défaut de ſe raporter à cette circonſtance. On diroit que la *tranquillité du Marché-neuf*, eſt le ſignal qui donne lieu aux Voleurs de s'emparer de la Ville. Il faloit rendre cette tranquilité plus génerale, & telle qu'elle regardât tout Paris, puiſque c'eſt de tout Paris que les *Voleurs s'emparent*. Ici, le Poëte perd encore une belle occaſion de blâmer : Ce n'eſt guere pour ſubſiſter que l'on vole à Paris, ou du moins ce n'eſt pas ce qui y rend le nombre des Voleurs ſi grand ; on y vole pour avoir de quoi fournir au Train de vie qui y eſt ordinaire.

Le bois le plus funeſte, & le moins fréquenté,
Eſt, au prix de Paris, un lieu de ſûreté.
Malheur donc à celui qu'une affaire imprévûë
Engage un peu trop tard au détour d'une ruë ;
Bien tôt quatre Bandits, lui ſerrant les côtez :
La Bourſe : il faut ſe rendre ; ou bien non, reſiſtez,
A fin que vôtre mort, de tragique mémoire,
Des maſſacres fameux aille groſſir l'Hiſtoire.

Ce

This Deſcription is, likewiſe, ſmart enough, and it gives us an Idea of *Paris*. But the Pacifickneſs of the *Marche-Neuf* carries with it ſomething very mean, and does little Credit to the *Bills* and *guilty Books* of the *glad Mechanick*; and the laſt Verſe, which is, otherwiſe, very good, labours under the Defect of depending upon that Circumſtance. One might imagine, that the Calmneſs of the *Marche-Neuf* was the Signal which gave Room for the *Thieves* to *ſeize the City*. This Calmneſs ſhould have been made more general, and ſuch as might have included all *Paris*, ſince it was all *Paris* that the *Thieves ſiez'd*. Here, again, the Poet loſes a very proper Occaſion of exerting his Satyrick Faculty: It is very ſeldom that People rob at *Paris* for bare Subſiſtence; or, at leaſt, it is not that which makes the Number of Felons ſo great: They rob there in order to get wherewithal to ſupport the voluptuous Manner of Living in Practice.

No Wood, where bloody Murderers retreat,
But what's ſtill ſafer than a *Paris* Street?
Wretched the Man whom Buſineſs keeps abroad,
The Danger would be leſs to truſt the Road,
If thro' an Alley he's oblig'd to go,
'Tis Odds but he in Ambuſh finds the Foe:
Beſet by Rogues, ſaluted with a Curſe,
'Tis well if they're contented with his Purſe:
If he reſiſts they cut his Throat, and then
His Death's recorded by ſome Ballad Pen;
Or ſung in Doggrel Verſe, or ſerves to fill
The Tales of Maſſacrees, and Weekly Bill.

Ce morceau qui nous repréſente ce qui ſe paſſe à Paris, & qui s'y paſſe aſſez ſouvent pour mériter d'entrer dans une Satire, peut, je crois, paſſer pour ce qu'il y a de meilleur. C'eſt un trait de peinture naturel & hardi, qui frape comme venant de main de maître. En effet, on diroit qu'un Maître n'a touché á cette Piece que par-ci par-là, comme il eſt ordinaire aux Peintres fameux, de relever de quelques traits les Ouvrages de leurs Aprentifs, & de les faire paſſer enſuit ſous leur nom.

Pour moi qu'une Ombre étonne, accablé de Sommeil,
Tous les jours je me couche avecque le Soleil.
Mais en ma chambre à peine ai-je éteint la lumiere,
Qu'il ne m'eſt plus permis de fermer la paupiere.

Ces vers ne ſont plus de la même force : le Poëte dit qu'il ſe *couche avec le Soleil*, parce qu'une *Ombre l'étonne* ; c'eſt ſa principale raiſon ; & il ajoute, comme en paſſant, qu'il eſt *accablé de Sommeil*, qu'en eſt une beaucoup plus naturelle & plus forte. A ces circonſtances, il en ajoûte une autre aſſez plaiſante : *il ſe couche avec le Soleil, & il éteint la Lumiere.*

Des Filoux effrontez, d'un coup de piſtolet,
Ebranlent ma fenêtre, & percent mon volet.

C'eſt

This Fragment, which repreſents to us what is tranſacted at *Paris*, and which happens often enough to deſerve a Place in a Satyr, may, I believe, paſs for ſome of the beſt of the whole. It is a Stroke bold and natural, which ſtrikes as done by a Maſterly Hand. In Effect, one would be apt to think, that this Piece had been touch'd by a Maſter, only here and there, as famous Painters commonly embelliſh the Performances of their Diſciples with ſome Strokes, and then make them paſs under their own Name.

For me, my Buſineſs with the Day is done;
I regulate my Setting with the Sun:
Faſt then my Doors, my Shutters cloſe I keep,
And when he goes to Bed, I'd go to Sleep:
But 'tis in vain in Town to hope for Reſt,
For Sleep the Eyes, and Quiet flies the Breaſt;
And ſcarce my Candle's out before I find
No Eaſe is there, or for the Eyes or Mind:

Here is no longer the Force and Energy that appear'd in the foregoing Lines. The Poet ſays, that he *ſets with the Sun*, becauſe [as the Original has it] *he is affraid*, even, *of a Shaddow*; that is his chief Reaſon; and he adds, as by the Bye, that *he'd fain Sleep*, which is a much ſtronger and more natural Reaſon for going to Bed early. To theſe Reaſons he joins another pleaſant enough; *he lies down with the Sun*, and *puts out his Candle.*

Some deſp'rate Burglarer his Piſtol fires,
Nor always innocent of Blood retires;
The Ball thro' Windows and thro' Curtain flies,
And Fear preſents the Robber to my Eyes.

This

C'eſt un hazard bien extrordinaire que celui-là, & qui ne doit point être compté parmi les incommoditez de Paris. Il auroit autre choſe à dire ſur les *Filoux*, qui les caractériſeroit mieux, & de tous Perſonnages que le Poëte pouvoit leur faire jouër, il n'y en a peut-être aucun de ſi recherché que celui de leur faire tirer ce *coup de piſtolet*, ni qui les diſtingue moins des Voleurs. Au reſte, ces ſix vers, auſſi-bien que pluſieurs autres de ce Poëme, ne ſont rien moins que des vers aiſez & libres, dont la Rime ſoit heureuſe; elle eſt trop chargée, trop clouée au vers. Ce Poëte avoit raiſon de vouloir aprendre de Moliere *l'art de la trouver*, & ſi pluſieurs de ces Poëmes reſſembloient à celui-ci, on pourroit dire qu'il avoit raiſon de vouloir aprendre de lui *l'art de ne rimer plus.*

J'entens crier par tout, au meurtre, on m'aſſoſſine;
Ou, le feu vient de prendre à la maiſon voiſine,

Les *Aſſaſſinats*, quoi que frequens à Paris, ne le ſont pas au point qu'il en donne l'idée, en faiſant crier *par tout* au meurtre, & les *Embraſemens* n'y ſont pas plus ordinaires qu'ailleurs; peut-être même

This is an Accident of a very extraordinary Nature, and which has no Room to be reckon'd among the Incommodities of *Paris*. Something elſe might have been ſaid concerning the *Thieves*, which would have characteriz'd them much better; and of all the Parts our Poet could have made them act, there would not, perhaps, have been one ſo inconſiſtent, ſo far fetch'd as that of making them *fire their Piſtols*, or that leſs diſtinguiſhes a Felon or Robber. As for the reſt theſe laſt (*c*) ſix Couplets, as well as ſeveral others in this Poem, are far from being free and eaſy Verſe, commendable for their lucky unaffected Rhimes: No, they are too much forc'd, and, as it were, *rivetted* into the Tails of their reſpective Verſes. This Poet was in the Right to have a Deſire to learn of *Moliere* L'ART DE LA TROUVER; [The Art of finding it.] and if many of his Poetick Performances are like this, one might ſay, that he would have been in the Right to have learn'd L'ART DE NE RIMER PLUS. [The Art of rhiming no more.

Hark! Murder! Help me! Help! I hear 'em cry,
Thieves! Thieves! And ſerenaded thus I lie.
Now Fire they tell me's in our Neighbour's Houſe,
And from my Bed, in mortal Dread I rouze:

Aſſaſſinations, tho' frequent enough at *Paris*, are not, however, ſo very common as the Idea he gives us ſeems to intimate, nor go they ſuch a Length as to ſalute one's Ears ſo often with

(*c*) *They are ſo in the* Engliſh, *tho' but ſix Verſes in the* French.

même l'y ſont-ils moins qu'en aucune autre grande Ville, & que ce'ſt le Poëte qui met ici le *feu* à une *maiſon* pour ſe tirer d'affaire.

Tremblant, & demi mort, je me leve à ce bruit,
Et ſouvent ſans pourpoint je cours toute la nuit.
Car le feu, dont la flame en ondes ſe déploie,
Fait de nôtre cartier une ſeconde Troie ;

Vous diriez que tout ſon *cartier* eſt reduit en cendres, que le feu le pourſuit dans ſa fuite ; & même que cela lui arrive *ſouvent*.

Où main Grec affamé, maint avide Argien,
Au travers de charbons va piller le Troïen.

Ce *Pillage* acheve de donner l'idée d'un grand Embraſement.

Enfin ſous mille crocs la Maiſon abîmée
Entraine auſſi le feu qui ſe perd en fumée.

Cet Embraſement, comparable à celui de Troie, & qui l'oblige de courir toute la nuit, ſe reduit enfin à une *Maiſon* brûlée. Les Evenemens generaux qui ſe trovent ramaſſez dans cette Piece, devroient du moins avoir leur exactitude,

&

with *Murder! Murder!* Nor are Fires more frequent there than elſewhere; nay, perhaps, it might be made appear that they are even leſs common there than in any other great City, and that it is the Poet who here ſets a *Houſe* on *Fire* merely to extricate himſelf.

Half naked from our Houſe to his I run,
All Night in Terror that 'twill take our own;
The raging Flames our Neighbourhood deſtroy,
And all around is like a ſecond *Troy*.

Would not one imagine, that his whole *Neighbourhood* was reduc'd to Aſhes, that the *Flames* were purſuing him cloſe at the Heels, and even that all this happen'd very frequently?

Where many an *Argive* Rogue, and greedy *Greek*,
Thro' Fire and Aſhes *Trojan* Plunder ſeek.

This *Plunder* compleats the Idea of a moſt lamentable Conflagration.

Down with a thouſand Cracks the Fabrick falls,
And bare at laſt are left the burning Walls;
The Fury of the Flames the Ruins broke,
And the choak'd Fire is loſt itſelf in Smoke.

This mighty Conflagration, comparable to that of *Troy*, and which oblig'd him to (*d*) *run* all Night long, at length dwindles to the burning of one (*e*) *Houſe*. The general Incidents which we meet with pil'd up together in this Piece, ought

(*d*) *So ſays the Original.* Vide.
(*e*) *As in the* French.

& être par-là au deſſus de la Critique ; mais il faudra nous contenter de la beauté particuliere des vers. Ces deux ici ſont très beaux, & peignent bien la choſe. C'eſt domage qu'ils en renverſent tant d'autres.

Je me retire donc, encore pâle d'effroi :
Mais le jour eſt venu quand je rentre chez moi.
Je fais pour repoſer un effort inutile :

Ces trois vers peuvent, je crois, être mis au rang des bons ; ils ſont ſimples & ſans Eſprit. Il y a un peu plus d'Eſprit dans celui qui ſuit, & il vaut un peu moins.

Ce n'eſt qu'à prix d'argent qu'on dort en cette Ville.

Ne diroit-on pas que le Sommeil ſe vend à Paris que c'eſt à tant par heure, ou à tant par nuit qu'on y dort ?

Il faudroit dans l'enclos d'un vaſte logement,
Avoir loin de la rue un autre apartment.

C'eſt

ought at leaſt to have their Share of Exactneſs, and in that Point to have kept out of the Reach of Criticiſm: But I perceive we muſt alone content ourſelves with the particular Beauty of the Verſes. Theſe laſt Verſes are very good, and paint the Thing extremely well: It is Pity that they knock on the Head ſo many others.

Still pale with Fear, I to my Houſe return'd,
And every Thing, methought, about me burn'd:
'Twas light before I to my Lodging came,
But to my Bed both Day and Night's the ſame:

Theſe Verſes may, I fancy, be likewiſe rank'd in the Number of the good ones: They are plain, and without abundance of Wit. There is ſomewhat more Wit in what follows, tho' not without Blemiſh.

I lay me down to reſt, for Reſt I pray,
Which none can have, in Town, unleſs they pay.
At *Paris*, Sleep, like other Things is ſold,
And you muſt purchaſe your Repoſe with Gold:

Would not any Body ſwear, that, at *Paris*, *Sleep* was ſold at ſo much by the Hour, or that People *ſlept* at ſuch a ſet Price *per* Night?

Room within Room, at Rates exceſſive, hire,
And far from thoſe which front the Street retire;
'Tis well if you the Noiſe from thence can keep,
And if in any Corner you can Sleep.

He

C'eſt trop s'arrêter ſur ce qui regarde ſon Sommeil. Au lieu de nous dire comme quoi on ne peut pas dormir à Paris, ou y paſſer tranquillement la Nuit, & d'apuier là-deſſus, il pouvoit ſe plaindre de ce qu'on n'y peut pas paſſer tranquillement le Jour, qu'on n'y eſt point à ſoi, à cauſe du grand nombre de gens dont il faut eſſuier les Viſites. Cet inconvenient doit être très-grand pour un Homme d'eſprit, pour un Poëte fameux, & il convient mieux à la Satire; c'eſt ſur ce pied là qu'il ſeroit bon d'avoir *loin de la ruë un autre apartement.*

Paris eſt pour un Riche un Païs de Cocagne.

Pas trop *Païs de Cocagne*, puiſque tantôt le *feu prend à la maiſon voiſine*, que tantôt on eſt menacé d'un *Déluge nouveau*; que les *Filoux* tirent des *coups de piſtolet* & font *crier au meurtre* que le *bruit des Cloches*, des *Vents* & de la *Grelé* font *mourir* les gens, & que le Riche lui même eſt renverſé dans ſon *Carroſſe*, qui ſe trouve jetté, dans un *tas de bouë* dans un *grand* tas.

Sans ſortir de la Ville, il trouve la Campagne.
Il peut dans ſon Jardin, tout peuplé d'arbres verds,
Receler le Printems au milieu des Hivers,
Et foulant le Parfum de ſes plantes fleuries,
Aller entretenir ſes douces rêveries.

Foules

He dwells by much too long upon his *Sleeping*. Instead of acquainting us, in such prolix Terms, that People cannot rest as they would at *Paris*, for the Noises they hear in the Night, he might rather have complain'd of his not having an Hour in the Day to himself, by Reason of the Multiplicity of Visitors, with whose Impertinence he was continually pester'd. This, indeed, would have been a very great Inconveniency to a Man of Wit, a famous Poet, and a much properer Subject for Satyr: Upon this Account, it would be very proper he should *retire far from those* Rooms *which front the Street.*

Paris is for the Rich a glorious Place,

Not so very *glorious a Place* neither, all Things consider'd; since, every now and then, *a Neighbours House takes Fire*, one is threaten'd with *another Deluge*, the *Thieves fire their Pistols thro' Windows and Curtains*, People *cry out Murder*, the Tintamarre of *Bells*, the *Winds* and the *Rain kill Folks*, and the *Rich* themselves are frequently *overturn'd* in their *Coaches*, and left sprawling in the *Mire*, a *great Heap of Mire*. [See the *French.*]

From Town they, when they please, to Country pass;
Within the Walls they have their Grots and Groves,
Their flow'ry Gardens, and their green Alcoves:
In Midst of Winter they enjoy the Spring,
And hear the captive Birds in Cages sing:
The City Air's perfum'd with *Sylvan* Sweets,
And lonely Walks are join'd to crowded Streets;
Where he who's rich may on his Wealth employ
His Thoughts, and sweetly his dearself enjoy.

Fouler du Parfum, eſt une expreſſion hardie, & la Penſée l'eſt auſſi : A Paris les *Jardins* ne préſentent point en *hiver* des *Plantes fleuries* à *fouler*. Mais quand cela ſeroit, il n'y auroit pas là dequoi remplir l'idée d'un *Païs de Cocagne*, & ſi la Ville de Paris la donne, c'eſt par de tout autres endroits. Ce *Païs de Cocagne*, de quelque maniere qu'on l'entende, eſt une concluſion à laquelle on ne s'attend point dans une Poëme ſur les Incommoditez de Paris.

Mais, moi, grace au Deſtin, qui n'ai ni feu ni lieu
Je me loge où je puis, & comme il plait à Dieu.

D'abord le Poëte a un *chez ſoi* au voiſinage d'un Serrurier ; après cela il inſinuë qu'il a un *Apartment*, quand il dit, que pour dormir il en faudroit avoir *un autre*. Ici il n'a *ni feu ni lieu* ; le tout en vingt-quatre heures de tems. N'eſt-ce pas là *ſur la Scene, en un jour, renfermer des années* ? Mais c'eſt qu'il importe davantage de lui relever, c'eſt que, finiſſant comme il a commencé, il fait intervenir *Dieu* mal à propos ; *Dieu* & le *Deſtin*, & en parle d'une maniere indigne. C'eſt qu'un peu d'Eſprit fort, qui met au-deſſus des Sentimens vulgaires, fait bien ; cela donne un air cavalier qui impoſe & fait honneur dans le monde. En cela le Poëte n'imite pas ſon modelle : *Horace* non-ſeulement prononce avec reſpect les noms de *Jupiter* & d'*Apollon*,

Trample on Perfumes, [as in the Original. *Vide.*] is a bold Expreſſion, and the Thought is alſo bold. The Gardens at *Paris* preſent us not, in *Mid-Winter*, with *flowery Plants to tread upon.* But even if all that was real Fact, it would not be ſufficient to furniſh out an Idea of *un Pais de Cocagne*, [*a glorious Place*;] and if the City of *Paris* deſerves that Title, moſt other Places do the ſame. After what Manner ſoever this *Pais de Cocagne* is to be underſtood, it is a Concluſion one did not expect in a Poem concerning the Incommodities of *Paris.*

But I, thank Fate, who've neither Houſe nor Home,
Am glad if any one will make me Room;
To ſleep I'm forc'd to hire another's Bed,
Lodge where I can, and where by Chance I'm led.

At firſt, our Poet has a *Home* in the Neighbourhood of a *Smith*: Afterwards, he inſinuates, that in order to get a little *Sleep*, he muſt take a new Lodging: Here he has neither *Houſe nor Home*; and all this within four and twenty Hours. Is not this *ſur la Scene, en un Jour, renfermer des Années?* But what he moſt deſerves to be taken up for is, that, concluding as he began, he, diſreſpectfully, introduces *God*; *God* and *Fate*; and that after a very unworthy Manner. He does it becauſe he is of Opinion, that a little ſtrong Wit, *alias* Libertiniſm, which exalts one above vulgar Sentiments, does well; that gives one a Gentleman-like Air, which makes one eſteem'd and honour'd in the World. But in this our Poet does not intimate his Model: *Horace*, not only pronounces the Names of *Jupiter* and *Apollo* with Reverence, but even

mais il pare même plusieurs de ses Poësies de Sentimens réligieux ; il se fait glorie de les avoir, & il veut que les *Romains* les aient de même qu'ils respectent les Dieux. Pour *Virgile*, qui est un *Poëte sans défaut*, outre qu'il fait de la Religion le grand mérite de son Heros, du pieux *Enée*, les plus beaux endroits de son Poëme tirent leur beauté des Sentimens réligieux que l'on y remarque. Mais *Virgile* & *Horace* valoient par le Cœur autant que par l'Esprit ; ils ne se regloient pas sur le goût du Peuple, mais, en Genies superieurs, ils en regloient le Goût. La plûpart de ceux qui prennent aujour'd'hui le nom de Poëtes, pourroient bien n'être que des Genies subalternes, des Imitateurs des Poëtes. Ou ils ne sentent pas les grandes Folies des Hommes, les Folies en vogue, ou ils sont Peuple eux mêmes. Au reste, comme il n'y a rien de plus triste que de n'avoir pas les Sentimens de Religion, qui sont le Mérite de l'Homme, il n'y a rien de plus lâche que de n'oser pas faire paroitre ces Sentimens, lors-qu'on les a, d'être Homme, & d'avoir honte de ce qui fait l'essentiel de l'Humanité,

adorns ſeveral of his Poems with religious Sentiments: He glories in poſſeſſing them himſelf, and is deſirous that the *Romans* ſhould, likewiſe, be poſſeſs'd of them, and that they ſhould revere the Gods. As for *Virgil*, who was a Poet *without Fault*, beſides his making the chief Merit of his Hero, the pious *Æneas*, to conſiſt in Religion, the Beauty of the fineſt Paſſages in his Poem lies in the religious Sentiments wherewith they are embelliſh'd. But *Virgil* and *Horace* are no leſs to be admir'd for the Beauty of their Minds, than for the Sprightlineſs of their Wit and Genius; they did not regulate their Thoughts according to the Taſte of the Publick, but like Men of ſuperior Genius, they regulated that. The Majority of thoſe who, in our Days, aſſume the Name of Poets, may very well be look'd on only as Subalterns, Men of low Genius, Imitators of the Poets: They either are blind to the Follies of Mankind, to the Follies in Vogue, or elſe they are themſelves like the reſt of the Vulgar. As to the reſt, as there is nothing more deplorable than not to have Sentiments of Religion, in which Man's Merit conſiſts, ſo there is nothing more puſilanimous than not to diſplay thoſe Sentiments, when one is poſſeſs'd of them, to be a Man, and to be aſham'd of what is the very Eſſential of Humanity.

But what! Is this one of the applauded Poems of *France*, one of the ten or twelve Satyrs of its famous Poet? And does *Paris* afford Monſieur *Boileau* nothing but this! This City, ſays he, abounds with all Sorts of Inconveniencies: We hear Noiſes all Night long, which hinder us from ſleeping: At break of Day the Tradeſmen begin to work, and the Noiſe redoubles: There are Storms of Wind and Hail: The Streets are crowded, and conſequently very incommodious for Paſſengers, ſince the Throngs are ſometimes ſo very great, that People are thereby interrupted from their urgent Affairs, by not being able to get along: Thoſe who are out late at Night, are in Danger of falling into the Hands of Robbers: To little Purpoſe it is there to go to Bed in Hopes of Reſt; for ſome neighbouring Houſe or other takes Fire, and one is expos'd to new Terrors and Vexations: *Paris* is a fit Place for none but the Rich, who paſs their Lives glorioufly; and the Poet, not being of that Number, paſſes there his Time but very indifferently.—This is a Summary of what, in florid Terms, this Poetick Performance acquaints us with, and which is very little worthy our Knowledge. The whole is of no Manner of Value, either for the Wit or good Senſe it contains; nor has it any thing to recommend it as a Poem, excepting the bare Expreſſion alone: That is what it has Poetical in it. A ſingle *Proſaick* Verſe, that is, a Verſe which expreſſes itſelf in ordinary Terms, is conſider'd as an unpardonable Fault in a Piece of Poetry; with much more Reaſon, then, may a Poem, intirely *Proſaick*, a Poem that ſays nothing at all, be conſider'd as a bad Performance, among Poetick Performances. Where is the *Proſaick* to be met with but in the Expreſſion? If that is true; if the Expreſſion

preſſion is all the Advantage Poeſy has over Proſe, Poeſy is very inconſiderable. But that is not the Caſe: This Language of the Gods, as the Poets term it, ought to tell us ſublime Things, and likewiſe to tell them us after a ſublime Manner; hence it proceeds, that Mediocrity in Poeſy is look'd upon as a Fault; and this one would take to extend as well over the Senſe as over the Expreſſion. It is certain, that to dreſs up ordinary Thoughts in fine Expreſſions is giving us the Appearances of Poeſy, and not Poeſy itſelf. But in this Piece, perhaps, Fault might be likewiſe found with the Expreſſion, nay even with the very Rhime, which ought to be one of the chief Ornaments of a Poetick Performance; I have already, *en paſſant*, drop'd a Word on that Subject; I know not whether or no I am in the Right. It ſeems to me, that the Rhime, in order to give a good Grace to Verſe, ought not to contain the Eſſential, but ſome Circumſtance only; that it ought to embelliſh as well as finiſh it, and to have ſomething in it free and ſporting; and that the Verſe have as little Dependance upon it as poſſible. Theſe of this Poet have none of that Beauty: The Senſe very often depends upon the Rhime, which makes his Verſes rather hobble than ſoar. In Regard to the Senſe, were it worthy of Poetick Numbers, this Defect ought to be over-look'd; but that excepted, ſince the Eſſential of Poeſy is here wanting, it conſequently ſtarts a freſh Reaſon for placing this Satyr in the Rank of ordinary Poems. But every celebrated Poet may, perhaps, to a certain Point, have it in his Power to eſtabliſh a Piece, in ranking it among his other Productions, as Sovereigns have it in their Power to ennoble any of their Subjects, or legitimate their ſpurious Off-ſpring. If that were ſo, our Criticiſm would

reach

reach farther than it ought to go, and we ſhould be in the Wrong to condemn this Poem otherwiſe than on the Footing of a Satyr, of which it bears the Name without having the Character. And if we would be poſitively bent to have it needs be a good Satyrick Piece, there ſtill remains one Hole for it to creep into, and to become ſuch; but I am not ſure we could get it to paſs upon the World: I mean to conſider it as *une Piece chagrine*, a *peeviſh* Piece, wherein the Poet has amaſs'd all the Incidents he could think of to put out of Humour, not a reaſonable Man, which is the Aim of common Satyrs, but Incidents which work that Effect upon capricious whimſical Perſons, who fret at every Thing that does not hit their Taſte. This is a Character which really deſerves to be deſcrib'd. Upon a Footing of this Nature, indeed, this Poem may very well be call'd a Satyr; and it muſt be allow'd, that, generally ſpeaking, the Poet has handled his Subject mighty well.

This, Sir, if my Memory has not fail'd me, is the very Criticiſm we made upon Monſieur *Boileau*'s Satyr, except it was that we were ſomewhat more particular. To have made a better Criticiſm, we ſhould have had a better Piece to work upon: But Monſieur *L'Abbé*, who preſented this to us, probably thought, he muſt give us one which did not treat of Matters of too ſublime a Nature, and one that, at leaſt, was not beyond our Comprehenſion; and therefore he pitch'd upon this, as rather eaſy to be criticis'd upon, than proper to furniſh out Matter for a good Criticiſm. Adieu, dear Sir; I make account ſoon to follow my Epiſtle, and in a few Days to have the Pleaſure of embracing you, as being, *&c.*

FINIS.

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REMARKS

ON THE

LETTERS,

CONCERNING

The *Engliſh* and *French*:

DESCRIBING

The CHARACTER and CUSTOMS

OF THE

ENGLISH and *FRENCH*

NATIONS.

Alſo upon the ESSAY on

TRAVELLING.

By Gentlemen of the *Engliſh* and *French* Nations.

With a complete INDEX.

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REMARKS

ON THE

LETTERS

CONCERNING

The *Engliſh* and *French*, &c.

WHEN the Letters concerning the *Engliſh* and *French* Nations, and upon *Travelling*, were firſt publiſhed, I read them with abundance of Curioſity and Attention; and was not a little glad of having at length found a *Thinking Swiſs*. It muſt be allowed we frequently entertain ridiculous Prejudices againſt ſome Particular Nations; But I can now eaſily conceive a Sect of Philoſophers upon the top of the *Alps*, as I have for ſome time imagined, that Poetry may flouriſh in *Aſtracan* and *Norway*, ſince we have many Poets among us, that one would think came from thoſe Countries.

But what a Philoſopher is this? His moral Philoſophy ſearches not for the ridiculous Part of Man's Character, in the imperceptible and neceſſary Motions of Self-love, (the fruitleſs Employment of our Modern Wits) but in the moſt common, and ordinary Actions, in things which ſtrike our Senſes, and which we think agreeable to Reaſon, becauſe they are ſo in oppoſition to Cuſtom.

This Gentleman, with his thinking Head, is he not, by your Leave, a *Frenchman* in diſguiſe, or a mere *Swiſs Spectator?* An inſipid Fiction, which hath reduced a wretched Author to the Condition of being an *Unfortunate, Unknown Spectator.* This Author is a *Swiſs*, a very *Swiſs*, an *Engliſh* and *French Swiſs* at the ſame time: That is, one who hath formed his Mind, from the Intercourſe which he hath had among Men of both Nations. As a *Swiſs*, he hath Simplicity and good Senſe; like an *Engliſhman* he diſcovers a profound Judgment, and deep Penetration, and abounds with the Delicacy and Vivacity of the *French*. According to him, the *Swiſs* judges impartially, the *Engliſhman* excels in Reflection, and the *Frenchman* in Imagination. We are here conſidering Philoſophy in Repreſentation, and Morality in Picture: In other reſpects the Author is a mere *Timon*. I cannot think it would be agreeable to live with ſuch a one, but ſhould always delight to read his Writings; becauſe he is generally a Follower of Truth. 'Tis indeed the Love of Truth, that makes us fond of Satyr; therefore ſuch a Diſpoſition is very commendable; for whatſoever proceeds from the Love of Truth, is generally good: And, on the contrary, a Diſpoſition to Panegyrick is not good, becauſe it derives its Original

ginal from Falſhood. Thus Elogy, even ſhort Elogy, has but an offenſive Beauty, as every Body knows by Experience.

I affirm, I have not ſuffered my ſelf (tho' a *Frenchman*) to be prejudiced by the Succeſs and quick Sale of thoſe Letters. The Inclination I have for Satyrical Philoſophy, for criticizing on Manners, for the Cenſure on bad Cuſtoms, have not inclined me to Partiality in peruſing this new Piece. The Author, in many Points, appears to me, to have aſſumed the Character of a Man-hater, and to have carried his Reflections too far, againſt Things in their own Nature Innocent, and ſometimes Laudable. On theſe occaſions, I had rather he thought me a *Timon*, than an *Ariſtarchus*. He is likewiſe in ſome places Inſipid and Falſe, tho' commonly Judicious and True.

I have formed this Judgment of him from his *Letters upon the* Engliſh *and* French, *and upon Travelling*. For never having been in *England*, I can be no competent Judge of what is contained in them relating to thoſe of that Nation. I underſtand their Language, but am wholly unacquainted with their Manners and Cuſtoms. However, I had an Inclination to know the Opinion that is entertained of them at *London*, where the Love of Truth and Philoſophy prevails more than any where elſe. I have in that City, a Friend of great Learning and Wit; he is not a *Refugeè*, but an *Engliſhman* of Quality, with whom I contracted an intimate Friendſhip, when he was at *Paris*, in the Years 1719 and 1720, to whom I writ the following Letter:

SIR,

SIR,

" THERE has been printed at *Geneva*, and " lately reprinted at *Paris*, a Book, in-" tituled, *Letters concerning the* Engliſh *and* " French, *and upon Travelling*. I take the op-" portunity by My Lord * * * * * who is re-" turning to *England*, to ſend it you, tho', per-" haps, you have already ſeen it. The *Paris* " Edition, you will preſently ſee, is much the " beſt. I beg you will give me your Thoughts " very particularly of that Piece; whether the " Deſcription the Author gives of the *Engliſh*, " your Manners, your Inclinations, your Vir-" tues, and your Vices, be juſt and true? I am " perſwaded you will decide this Queſtion with " the utmoſt Impartiality."

About a Month after my ſending this Letter, I received the following Anſwer, which I have faithfully trrnſlated from the *Engliſh*, a very uſeful Language, which every *Frenchman* of Letters ought to be acquainted with, preferably to any other modern Tongue. After this Letter you will find three other Letters from me, *about the Letters upon the* French, *and upon Travelling*, which I had not written but to oblige the Author of the *Engliſh* Letter.

SIR,

" ABOUT ſix Months ſince, I had the Book " you mention in your Letter, of which " you have ſent me the *Paris* Edition. I ſhall " readily communicate to you my Remarks on " what the Author ſays concerning the *Engliſh*;

" upon

" upon condition that in return you alſo ac-
" quaint me with your Opinion, of what he
" ſays in reſpect to the *French*. You may aſ-
" ſure your ſelf, this is a Bargain, in which I
" will not deceive you. I would have you uſe
" the ſame Fidelity, and endeavour to be as
" open and free in your Reflections, as I ſhall
" probably be in mine."

In the firſt place, I can aſſure you, that the Author hath not travelled through all *England*: But hath only ſeen *London*, and is wholly unacquainted with People of Diſtinction. His Remarks are confined to that City, and to the Characters of thoſe he hath ſeen in Coffee-houſes, and from thence probably he hath drawn the ſuperficial Knowledge he hath of the *Engliſh*.

When he talks in general of their Temper and Genius, he is certainly right; but when he deſcends to Particulars, he always betrays his Ignorance. He had good Reaſon then to tell his Reader at his firſt ſetting out, *We may both be deceived.*

In his third Page he ſays, the *Engliſh have very little Education.* If he means that they are not fond of the Accompliſhments of riding the great Horſe, Fencing, Dancing, and the like Exerciſes, and that with reſpect to thoſe the Education in *England* is bad, he is plainly miſtaken. 'Tis true, there are not many excellent Maſters in *England* of this kind; they would ſcarce get a Livelyhood among us; therefore our young Gentlemen are ſent to Foreign Univerſities to learn thoſe Exerciſes: Beſides, the Diſcipline of our two Univerſities do not permit the young Nobility there educated, to apply themſelves to bodily Exerciſes, eſpecially dancing. 'Tis not the Method

Method there to form them to the Manners of the World, ſo early as they do in *France*, where you may commonly ſee a Child of Twelve Years old Politer and better bred, than a young Gentleman of Eighteen in *England*.. But at the ſame time, as for the real Culture and Improvement of the Mind, polite Learning, good Erudition, Philoſophy, *&c.* I will venture to ſay all *Europe* cannot afford a better School than *England*. But what they are more eſpecially inſtructed in, is the Laws, the Intereſts, and the Privileges of their Country, and pray what can they learn better?

Ibid. *Vicious Perſons are very numerous amongſt them.* 'Tis true Vice and Debauchery reign at *London*, as they do in all great and populous Cities; but as to the other Parts of *England*, it is certain there is no Country in the World, where Virtue is more eſteemed, or Vice had in greater Abhorrence. The Gentlemen among us, of the beſt Eſtates, but diſſolute Manners, find very few Votes in their ſeveral Counties, to be choſen Members of Parliament: For ſhould Libertines and Debauchees be Repreſentatives of a Nation!

The People of England, ſays he, *Pag.* 4. *Pay not Reſpect enough to great Men, and are not always ready to yield to them that Complaiſance which is paid them in all other Countries.* This is the Effect of our precious Liberty; the People here have no Devoirs to the Great, where every one lives by his own Induſtry: We have no *Tenures* here, as there are in other Countries, held by Virtue of a Feudal Right. The Vaſſal in *England* is diſcharged of every thing, by paying his Rent to the Lord of the Mannor; he is obliged to no Homage, Servitude, or Duty.

We

We muſt add to this, that no Man of Quality among us, is regarded for his Wealth, his Birth, or his Superiority of Genius and Knowledge; but only for the Reputation he hath acquired by his Probity. I have known a Duke of a great Family, who was very wealthy, a Man of Wit and Learning, paſs a Month at his Seat, which was finer, and more magnificent than that at *Petworth*, without receiving above two or three Viſits from the neighbouring Nobility and Gentry, tho' he had, in the Country, above Ten thouſand Pounds Sterling a Year. I have, on the other Hand, known a private Gentleman, of a ſmall Eſtate, but a good Man, in that Neighbourhood, who, at the Time of Election for Repreſentatives of the County, had the whole Neighbourhood attending him to the Election, when at the ſame time few or none followed the Duke. As to the Haughtineſs of the People of *England*, it proceeds from their Independance, and the reſpectful Submiſſions they receive from their great Men, when they ſollicit their Vote for Members of the Houſe of Commons. The Reſervedneſs which the *Engliſh* always prudently obſerve, is a Bar to their making Advances to Strangers, and to certain Politeneſſes which they might otherwiſe ſhew: But when they know, and value a Foreigner, they are even Prodigal of their Civilities, and lay aſide all Stiffneſs and Reſerve. Pray, Sir, in all our Acquaintance, could you ever diſcover a different Conduct in me?

In the 7th Page, the *Swiſs* gives us ſufficient Proof, that his pretended Knowledge of *England*, is taken chiefly from his Obſervations in our Coffee-houſes. The Title of Captain, ſays he, is given by us to every Fop that wears a Sword,

if we don't know him, as the Title of Abbot is to any Coxcomb in *France*, that wears the little Band and Cloak. 'Tis true, in all the Counties of *England*, as well as *London*, there is an eſtabliſhed Militia, and they that have the Commiſſion of Captain in the Militia, have the Title too, as well as Gentlemen of that Rank belonging to the Army: But without ſuch a Commiſſion they are not ſtiled Captains; tho' 'tis true, in Coffee-houſes and Taverns in *London*, many that wear Swords aſſume the Title of Captains, to procure Reſpect.

What the Author ſays, *pag.* 5. *That in our Houſe of Commons a few leading Men govern the reſt*, appears to me very juſt. He might here have remarked another very conſiderable Defect, that the Kingdom is very unequally repreſented: For the Deputies for the Counties, and the Nobility of *England*, amount to no more than Fourſcore and Twelve Perſons; the Repreſentatives for the Cities, and the great Towns, are about the ſame Number; when there are above three hundred Burgeſſes for little Boroughs, which are byaſſed in Elections, by Money, Promiſes, or Threats. The Repreſentation of the Kingdom was better regulated at Queen *Elizabeth*'s coming to the Crown: But ſince that Time, under Pretence that a greater Number of Members would contribute to the Security of the publick Liberty, the little Boroughs, whoſe Repreſentatives were not then above a hundred, are now increaſed to treble that Number; a Number too great; and is the Source of the Depravation and Defects that we find in our tumultuary Parliaments.

Page 12. he ſays, *That which is the Nobility in France, and elſewhere, is what we call Gentry.*

This

This Title heretofore properly appertained to none but ſuch as had Seigniories or Lordſhips; but now the Antiquity of a Name and Family, entitles a Man to the Rank of a Gentleman. Trade, indeed, among us, does not leſſen any Man's Gentility, (nor do I think it ſhould;) for tho' a younger Brother of a good Family endeavours to get an Eſtate by Buſineſs, yet he is ſtill accounted Noble: But when a private Gentleman is advanced to the Peerage, he muſt have Letters Patent, which are ordinarily given by the King at Arms, whom his Majeſty authorizes ſo to do. However, there is a great Diſtinction made between Nobility by Extraction, and that obtained by Creation.

Page 13. he proceeds to ſay, you may find Clergymen in Coffee-houſes, with a Pipe in their Hand, and ſometimes in Taverns. The Author had been more exact in his Account, if he had only ſaid, that in *London* there is in St. *Paul*'s Church-Yard a Coffee-houſe, called the *Chapter Coffee-houſe*, and there the Clergy generally reſort.

As to what he ſays of their frequenting Taverns, the Canons of the Church do allow it; but it is a very rare thing to ſee a Clergyman in any of them. Beſides the *Chapter* Coffee-houſe at St. *Paul*'s, where the Clergy ordinarily reſort about ſeven a-Clock at Night, there are ſeveral about the *Temple*, where the Lawyers, full of Pride and Diſhoneſty, do wilfully ſuffer their Clients to be ruined in their Hands. The Country Clergy, who have Law-ſuits depending, do ſometimes go to theſe Coffee-houſes, to conſult their Lawyers; nor are they liable to Scandal by ſo doing.

I ſhall here obſerve, that I have heard Dr. *Hudſon*, Keeper of the *Bodleian-Library*, known for his Editions of *Dionyſius Halycarnaſſeus*, and the Hiſtory of *Joſephus*, declare, with much Reaſon and Juſtice, That the Country Clergy were by much the moſt learned and pious of any in *England*: For many of our *London* Divines, are like your Abbots, that follow the Court; the Court is at *London*; I have ſaid enough.

The *Swiſs* is much offended, becauſe many of our *Engliſh* Clergy ſmoak. This trifling Nicety little deſerves to be taken notice of, which puts me in mind of the ſtrict Enquiries that were heretofore made into the Manners and Conduct of the Clergy, at the Time of the Rebellion, in the Reign of King *Charles* I. and the Year 1642. For when the *Presbyterian* Faction was grown powerful enough to execute their vile Projects, for the Abolition of Epiſcopacy, and the Extinction of Royalty, they took Arms againſt the King, and attacked the Eccleſiaſtical Government at the ſame Time. Then it was that the Parliament appointed a Committee of their own Body, to enquire into the Morals of all the Clergymen in *England*, and to that end ſent Commiſſioners into every County. I have read ſeveral authentick Books, and original Manuſcripts, containing Examinations, and Depoſitions on that Subject. Their Enquiries only in the County of *Leiceſter*, make up three great Volumes in Folio. And in all thoſe Examinations, and all the Depoſitions made before the Inquiſitors, there was no Crime objected to ſo much as one Eccleſiaſtick, ſave that of ſmoaking Tobacco, and going to the Garriſon of *Aſhby-de-la-Zouch*, a Place that held out for the King. The Crimes

Crimes laid to the Charge of the Clergy in other Counties, were of the like Nature. In ſhort, after theſe Commiſſaries, and the Committee of Parliament had finiſhed their Inquiſition, and the Parliament had aboliſhed Epiſcopacy, and had deprived more than Nine Thouſand Incumbents of their Benefices, Mr. *White*, who was Preſident of the Committee, and made the Report, had much Difficulty to make up a Liſt of One hundred Clergymen, that could juſtly be reproached for their Life and Manners: Beſides, the whole World knew, that he laid to their Charge innumerable Crimes which they had never committed. Dr. *Walker*, and others, have ſufficiently vindicated thoſe Gentlemen. But it is certain, never was Enquiry carried on with more Violence, Malignancy and Cunning; yet it ſerved only to give an inconteſtable Proof of the Piety and good Conduct of the Clergy of thoſe Times. And I may venture to ſay, that for the moſt Part, the Gentlemen of that Order now amongſt us, could ſtand the Teſt of the ſtricteſt Enquiries, and appear equally illuſtrious both for their Piety and Conduct.

Page 19. *The ſumptuous way of Living among our* Engliſh *Merchants, obliges them to ſell their Goods at the higher Rates.* Our Merchants are for the moſt Part very honeſt, and are content with a moderate Gain; and you may always take their Words, both as to the Goodneſs and Price of their Wares. The eſtabliſhed Opinion about Merchants and Bookſellers in *England* is, That they prefer their Reputation to their Profit.

Page 22. The Author ſays, He *always ſaw the* Engliſh *Peaſants on the Gallop.* It is, methinks, very ſtrange, that I, who have travelled through all

all Parts of the Kingdom, ſhould never make that Obſervation. Their ordinary Pace on Horſeback is a Trot, and if you ſee a Man galloping, you may conclude he is drunk. 'Tis true, about *London*, where there is a great deal of Duſt, the People frequently gallop, but they are commonly Taylors, or *London* Apprentices.

Page 24. The *Swiſs*, with Reaſon, commends *the Modeſty*, and the gentle Baſhfulneſs of our *Engliſh* Ladies: As to their Beauty, the Taſtes of Mankind are ſo various, that I ſhall ſay nothing of it here. In general they are very handſome, and take much more Care of their Teeth now, than formerly. *I have ſeen*, ſays the Author, *Patches in the Face of an old Woman through her Spectacles.* That may be; *in* England, *as well as in* France, *there are old Fools.* The *Engliſh* Women too, he ſays, are much for enquiring into future Events, and conſulting Aſtrologers. And, pray, from whence had he all this? Why, about forty Years ſince, the Dutcheſs of *Grafton*, and ſome other Ladies of Quality, went to conſult an Aſtrologer, to know ſomething about their Husbands. Upon this Story hath the *Swiſs* formed his Judgment of *Engliſh* Ladies conſulting Aſtrologers; whereas, in Truth, they are here, as elſewhere, equally deſpiſed by both Men and Women in *England.*

Page 30. *Idleneſs reigns much in* England. I affirm, on the contrary, that no People are more addicted to Induſtry and Application. The Author, who frequented chiefly the *London* Coffee-houſes, has framed his Idea of that Character from Perſons he ſaw there; an idle, foppiſh, uſeleſs Set of People, which may be frequently ſeen ſauntring in our Coffee-houſes. All our Tradeſmen in *England* take abundance of Pains. And

before

before that unhappy Affair of the *South-Sea*, no one propoſed to enrich himſelf under thirty Years Care and Induſtry in his reſpective Trade. They were contented with a moderate Profit, and left it to Time to make their Fortunes. But we had alſo our *Miſſiſippi*, which hath brought this corrupt Taſte amongſt our *Engliſh* Traders.

The Author, Page 32. declaims againſt the pretended Irreligion of the *Engliſh*. *In Matters of Religion*, ſays he, *You would imagine that every* Engliſhman *is for having a Religion after his own way, or none at all; and that there were no Hypocriſy in their Country.* That is to ſay, *England* hath either a fantaſtical Religion, or none at all. It is granted there are many Libertines and Unbelievers in *London*, eſpecially in our Coffee-houſes; but their Number is very inconſiderable in reſpect of thoſe, who ſubmit their Judgment to the true Faith. The ſerious Diſpoſition of the *Engliſh*, keeps them from inclining to Debauchery, and conſequently from falling into Irreligion. The Author however allows, that *England* abounds with good Men, whoſe Piety is Solid and Rational: (Let us pardon this Contradiction) "This appears, ſays he, "by the Number of their excellent Books of "Devotion; for none but Men of Piety and "Goodneſs could be the Authors of them. The "Morality contained in them is ſo pure and "ſound, that they muſt be the Compoſitions of "learned Men; beſides, there are ſome Books "that are univerſally applauded, and yet the "Authors are unknown; which is ſtill remote "from the Views of moſt learned Men."

What the *Swiſs* ſays, Page 37. *That the young Women here often make a Vow to marry the firſt Man that asks them*, is grounded on nothing but one

one or two Maid-ſervants, that have been abandoned by their Lovers. Does this deſerve to be cited to characterize a Nation, and ſerve to introduce this notable Reflection? One may in this diſcover ſome Remains of Ferocity, which is the Ground of their ancient Character.

The 12th Letter, Page 10. concerns our Theatre: I agree with him, that ſome of our Comedies are full, not only of Puns, but very indecent Expreſſions, and that the *French* Stage is better regulated, and more chaſte than ours. The *Engliſh* are ſenſible of theſe Faults, and condemn them; but our Poets, who are governed by their Intereſt, and have no other View but pleaſing the Multitude, are little concerned about procuring the Approbation of the more Intelligent and Polite, who would willingly have their Plays formed upon another Taſte. That inimitable Play of the Duke of *Buckingham*'s, intituled, *The Rehearſal*, was compoſed to ridicule, and expoſe the Faults of the Stage, which we complain of, as much as the *Swiſs*.

" The *Engliſh*, ſays he, prefer *Ben. Johnſon*, " to *Moliere*; for in all ſorts of Subjects they " give the Preference to their own Countrymen; " and we are obliged to them for naming the " ableſt Men amongſt them, to whom to give " the Preference, *tho' we do not prefer him on* " *all Subjects* (as the *Swiſs* is pleaſed to advance) " *to all the reſt of the World.*" We indeed eſteem *Johnſon*, as a good Writer, and Mr. *St. Evremont* is of our Opinion. No Man hath ſearched further into humane Nature, or hath better finiſhed the Characters he hath introduced upon the Stage. I own, *he knew nothing of Gallantry*; but that, as well as all other Faults he is reproached with, muſt,

muſt be attributed to the Manners of the Age he lived in. Women began not to appear on the *Engliſh* Stage, till after the Reſtoration of King *Charles* II. Before his Reign all our Plays were acted by Men, and the firſt Woman that appeared on the *Engliſh* Stage, was the Wife of Mr. *Betterton*, an incomparable Actor. King *Charles* II. by introducing Actreſſes on our Stage, corrupted our Manners. One of them, *Nel Gwin*, was a Miſtreſs to that Prince; and the Earl of *Oxford*, *Aubrey de Vere*, married another Actreſs, who had pleaſed him in acting the Part of *Roxilana*, in the Siege of *Rhodes*, written by Sir *William Davenant*.

"*Moliere*, ſays our Author, had more Matter "than *Johnſon*: The Characters in *France* are "general, and comprehend all ſorts of People; "whereas in *England* every one living writes as "he pleaſes, the Poet is confin'd only to parti-"cular Characters." A notable Diſtinction! As if we had not at *London*, as well as at *Paris*, Miſers, Uſurers, Lyars, inconſiderate young Men, Jealous Husbands, Cuckolds, Coxcombs, Hypocrites, *&c.* In *France*, indeed, they introduce Phyſicians on the Stage, which is not done here; becauſe they are for the moſt Part Men of Condition and Merit: Nor ſhould it be permitted, in any Country, to ridicule States or Profeſſions in general, but only thoſe in particular that abuſe ſuch Profeſſion or State; and this is practiſed in *England*, as well as in *France*.

It is true, our modern Poets ſteal from *Moliere*, and have the Front in their Prefaces and Prologues, to prefer themſelves to him; and 'tis an old Obſervation, that the more *Moliere* is abuſed by an Author, the more he hath generally ſtolen from him. Poets, in all Countries, are a ridi-

culous Kind of Men: For Mr. *Shadwell* ſays, in his Preface to *the Miſer*, "That no *French* "Piece hath been made uſe of by any of our "Poets, how bad ſoever, but appeared better "in *Engliſh*, than in the Original." (This is, I affirm, a very extravagant Propoſition.) Then he goes on, "'Tis not becauſe we want In-"vention, or Wit, that we borrow from the "*French*; but out of mere Idleneſs. This puts "me on altering *the Miſer* of *Moliere*, &c." By your Leave, Mr. *Shadwell*, you are not ſo Idle, as Vain and Impertinent; you are indeed a Poet, but a very bad one.

The *Swiſs*, in his 51ſt and 52d Pages, thinks it to his Purpoſe to make a Compariſon between this *Miſer* of Mr. *Shadwell*, and that of *Moliere*. But pray why has he picked out the moſt contemptible of all the *Engliſh* Poets, to compare with the beſt of the *French*? It is doing a Diſhonour both to the *Engliſh*, and *Moliere*, to undertake ſo ridiculous a Parallel. That celebrated Poem of Mr. *Dryden's*, *Mac Fleckno*, contains critical Remarks on Mr. *Shadwell's* Works, which are ſo very juſt, that the whole World muſt judge him to be a bad Writer. He had, indeed, ſome Reputation at firſt; but like that of one of your Modern Poets well known, and of whom ſome body has ſaid very pleaſantly, in a Pamphlet, *That his Lawrels were grown ſo very dry, that they would ſcarce cover four Hairs of his Head.* If the *Swiſs* would have produced ſome Tranſlator, or Imitator of *Moliere*, among the *Engliſh*, and at the ſame time have done them Juſtice, he might have mentioned the *Country Wife*, and the *Plain Dealer*, both which the Author, Mr. *Wicherly*, hath taken from the *School of Women*, and the *Man-hater* of *Moliere*.

What

What the Author ſays in the 67th Page, is by no Means true. We don't repreſent *Hanibal with a long Peruke*. The *Greeks* and *Romans* have always appeared on our Stage, in *Roman* or *Grecian* Habits. And with reſpect to modern Perſons, they are repreſented in an agreeable Habit, which is conformable to their Character, and the Cuſtom of their Country.

We eſteem Tragedy much more than Comedy, becauſe we love to be affected, and moved. An ingenious Comedy, well carried on, infinitely pleaſes us. We have not above three or four Tragi-Comedies, where there is a Mixture both of the Serious and Comick. Should theſe three or four Pieces, which, at this Time, pleaſe not the general Taſte, form the *Engliſh* Theatre; or ſhould they have given this Author a handle to decry our Taſte?

In *England*, the Death of Perſons is commonly repreſented on the Stage. This is founded on that Maxim of *Horace*.

Segnius irritant animos immiſſa per aures,
Quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus----

But it is falſe to affirm, that we are fond of ſeeing real Executions on the Stage.

Tho' in the old Tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, all the Perſons are either maſſacred, or executed by Ruffians; yet the *Engliſh* are now offended at it, and for this Reaſon, that Piece is with them reckoned a bad one, and is never acted.

The Tragedy of *Œdipus*, the *Swiſs* mentions, was compoſed by Mr. *Lee*, in the Time of his Lunacy; ſo that the Play is in general very extravagant, tho' there are many excellent Things in it. I can't ſay at the ſame time, that that

which was acted at *Paris*, whoſe Author, it is ſaid, is a very ſage, and a very flegmatick Poet, is better than that of Mr. *Lee*. The *Swiſs* ſays nothing of that extraordinary Incident in this *Engliſh* Tragedy; where *Œdipus* appears at the Window, as having his Eyes put out, and then, as from a Tribunal, he makes a beautiful Harangue, which he concludes comically, by throwing himſelf out of the Window, and killing himſelf by that extravagant Fall: Nevertheleſs, it is not the Actor that repreſents *Œdipus*, who throws himſelf out of the Window; but a Man of Paſtboard, made like him, which is thrown down: For had it been the Actor, he would really have killed himſelf. The People uſually laugh very heartily, at ſo bold and heedleſs a Leap: Thus ends that fine Tragedy, whoſe Cataſtrophe evidently ſhews, what kind of Brain the Author had.

It is falſe to affirm, that we have a Tragedy, in which is repreſented a Man having his Fleſh torn from him by red-hot Pincers. The Author means that Piece of *Otway*'s, entituled, *Venice Preſerved*. There are many moving Paſſages in that Piece, whoſe Author had a true Genius for the Stage; and here you ſee Executioners, and all Preparations for an Execution, and a Scaffold built. If one muſt ſpeak the Truth, theſe Spectacles appear leſs horrible to us, than to the *French*; leſs horrible, indeed, than they ought to appear to us: For if a Poet had regard to the Diſpleaſure, and the Indignation of the Publick, in bringing Executions on the Stage, (which he would not fail to do in *France*) he would by no means expoſe them upon the Stage. But he flatters himſelf that we ſhall approve of them; whereas he ſhould rather imagine, that we ſhall

bear

bear with them for the ſake of their other Beauties. After all, we cannot deny but that an innocent Perſon lead to a Scaffold, and already in the Hands of the Executioners, makes a very moving, and a very tragical Sight. If we conſult Reaſon only, I know not whether this Practice is to be condemned. The *French* condemn it; but 'tis their Taſte, not their Reaſon, that decides againſt it.

As for what follows, the *Swiſs* hath Reaſon to ſay, that *Dryden* hath at the ſame time plundered and abuſed the Poet *Corneille*. *Dryden* was a profeſſed Plagiary; but was himſelf endued with excellent Qualities, and what he produced from his own Invention is much eſteemed. It hath been remarked, that if you would know when he hath ſtolen from *Corneille*, you muſt obſerve whether or no he hath ſpoke ill of him in his Prologue. *Dryden* was very poor; ſo that many of his Pieces ſeem to have been compoſed out of mere Neceſſity, that is, in haſte. There are, indeed, no good Authors, but thoſe who are eaſy in their Circumſtances; and, I believe, that it is at *Paris*, as at *London*, under *Lewis* XIV; you had great Men in all kinds of Literature; becauſe Care was taken in *France* to improve the Fortunes of Men of Letters, knowing how neceſſary they were to the State.

The Extravagance of two young Gentlemen, the Author ſpeaks of in the 75th Page, is a Thing unknown in *England*. I have heard that the Earl of *Pembroke*, eldeſt Brother to the preſent Earl, was fallen into the Caſe he mentions; but it is ſuch a one as never happened ſince. That Nobleman was troubled with a kind of Madneſs and Fury. Thus does the *Swiſs* build

a general Accuſation upon a ſingular and uncommon Example.

Page 8. *Moſt of the married Men keep Miſtreſſes.* There is nothing more falſe, and for which there is ſo little Foundation. I have been in all the Counties of *England*, except the three Northern ones, which border on *Scotland*. The Nobility of each County are very well known to me; ſo that I can aſſure you, it very rarely happens, that there is not a good Correſpondence between the Husband and the Wife. A married Man that lives not with his Wife, or keeps Miſtreſſes, is extremely contemned; he paſſes for a Debaucheè, and a Man of no Morals. At *London* itſelf, where there is abundance of Debauchery, we ſee very few of thoſe bad Families. The Author then had little Reaſon to ſay, *That moſt of the married Men in* England *keep Miſtreſſes.* So that it hath been ſeen, *That they have taken them Home, and have made them eat at the ſame Table with their Wives.* All this may be; and I will add further, that when they pleaſe, as the Author ſays, they make them lye with them in the ſame Bed. But what a Proof is this? As if there were not Debaucheès in *England*, as well as in other Places. *You may ſee*, adds he, *theſe kept Miſtreſſes converſing with the married Women.* Here you have another Falſhood, or at leaſt it is a thing which rarely happens. A married Woman would loſe her Reputation, if ſhe received Viſits from a Woman of the Town, or was often ſeen any in Company with a noted Miſtreſs of ſome Lord.

The Earl of *Rocheſter*, of whom he here ſpeaks, is not the Author of all the Tales and licentious Pieces, which are attributed to him. He had an infinite deal of Wit, and was a great Debaucheè.

Debauchee. He had, at the ſame time, a great Reſpect and Tenderneſs for his Mother, and a very great Regard for his Wife. He was a great Penitent in the latter Part of his Life, and died with Sentiments becoming a good Chriſtian.

All the *Swiſs* advances in the 88th Page, is abſolutely falſe. You ſee not Blue Garters amongſt Mechanicks, playing at Bowls, throwing at Cocks, playing at Foot-ball, ranging themſelves together to throw down Paſſengers, Prize-fighting, Bear-baiting, &c. all Diverſions of the meaneſt of the Populace, and not of People of Condition; nor even of Merchants. There is, indeed, a Place near *London*, called *Marybone*, whither two Blue-Ribbons did formerly reſort, to play at Bowls with any that offered themſelves; which mightily diſhonoured them in the Eye of the World. 'Tis true, at Hazard-Tables, Perſons of the higheſt Rank are often confounded and mixt with others. But the ſame is done in other Countries; for this Play makes all equal. The moſt common Affront, he ſays, and greateſt amongſt the *Engliſh*, is calling a Perſon *French Dog*; in *French*, *chien François*. The *Engliſh* formerly had an exceeding Hatred for the *French*; the continual Wars between the two Nations, have produced that Animoſity; but ſince the Peace, that Hatred is quite diſſipated: The *French* are now conſidered and eſteemed in *England*; and *French Dog* is no longer in the Mouth of the People.

The fifteenth Letter is full of enormous Faults, and lets us ſee, that the Author attempts to ſpeak of the *Engliſh* Laws, without a ſufficient Knowledge of them. It is true, with regard to the Penal Laws, and in criminal Matters, the Letter of the Law is generally ſtuck to: So that before

fore a guilty Perſon is puniſhed, his Crime muſt be clearly expreſſed, and his Puniſhment exactly declared by the Law. This Rule prevents all arbitrary Sentences of Judges, and ſecures the Lives of the *Engliſh*. But what the *Swiſs* ſays upon the Subject of the Laws forbidding the having two Wives, but that it forbids not to have three or more, hath no Foundation, but in the Conceit of ſome ignorant Perſons amongſt the meaneſt of People. The Law forbids having more Wives than one only. The Act of Parliament made the firſt Year of *James* I. *ch.* 11. enacts, that a married Man, that marries one or more Perſons, during the Life of his firſt Wife, ſhall be puniſhed as guilty of Felony, that is to ſay, with Death. *Act.* 1. *Jac. c.* 11. It is then falſe, that the Law forbids the having two Wives, but not three or more. The Author is wrong in his Subject of Aſſaults. Our Law condemns all Outrages, and inflicts for them proportionable Puniſhments. The Caſe of cutting off a Noſe, happened to Sir —— *Coventry*, in the Reign of King *Charles* II. The Criminals were not puniſhed according to the Pains to be inflicted by the Statute made againſt Mutilation; but were fined a Thouſand Pounds, to be paid to Sir —— *Coventry*, as a Reparation for the Outrage. What would the *Swiſs* have ſaid, if he had lived ſome Ages ago, when Homicide was puniſhed, neither in *England*, or many other Countries, but by a Fine of five or ſix Pounds Sterling?

He is miſtaken likewiſe, in what he ſays about Theft. All the Penalties inflicted for that Crime in *England*, are very ſevere. If any one ſteals any thing, tho' but of little Value, out of a Houſe; if he breaks open the Door, or gets in at the Window, he is condemned to die; but if he

he goes into the Houſe, the Door being open, and by the Permiſſion of the People that dwell in it, and ſteals thence Things but of little worth, that is to ſay, if they exceed not the Value of three Shillings, he is condemned, either to a Priſon for ſome Years, or to hard Labour, and to be whipt.

The Author ſays, with Reaſon, that the Oath of a Strumpet in *England*, ſhall determine the Father of the Child ſhe is delivered of. In ſuch ſecret Communications, there is no ſurer Way of coming to the Knowledge of the Father; and very little Abuſe happens in theſe Caſes. The Duke he ſpeaks of, Page, 148. is the Duke of *N.* * * * *, who had no Children, and whoſe Wife was divorced. The Earl of *R* * * * *, Grandfather to the preſent Duke of *R* * * * *, had recourſe to the Parliament, procured his Wife's Child to be declared a Baſtard, and obtained a Divorce. The Puniſhments inflicted for Perjury in *England*, are too ſlight; but are very rigorous againſt Perſons guilty of Forgery. The Caſe which the Author mentions, Pag. 151. is that of *Young* and *Blakeal*: Theſe two Villains were protected by the Government. But what is to be done when Princes govern with wicked Policy? Why, the Caſe is to be lamented.

The Author, Pag. 173. repreſents, well enough, the wretched Condition of Priſoners for Debt. The Parliament from time to time gives them their Enlargement, and almoſt every ſeven Years an Act paſſes to give them Relief. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that we want ſome good Regulations for our Priſons, as well for Priſoners of State, as Priſoners for Debt. It is

very ſurprizing, that a Nation ſo jealous of her Liberty, takes no better Care for the Relief of thoſe, who, by their Poverty, have loſt theirs, and who find themſelves expoſed to the Oppreſſions, Injuſtice, and Cruelties of rapacious and mercileſs Gaolers, who ſacrifice, to their infamous Avarice, all the Sentiments of good Nature and Honour.

He cites, Pag. 161. Relations of Judgments, paſſed at the *London* Seſſions, held at a Place called the *Old-Bailey*; and gives an Account of the Executions of Perſons condemned to die in that Court. Theſe Relations are deſigned for the common People, and accommodated to their Taſte. The Confeſſor, called the *Ordinary of Newgate*, is order'd to compoſe thoſe Pieces, the Sale of which brings him abundance of Money. A *French* Refugée, he ſays, in Orders of the Church of *England*, had a long Time that Office, who was a covetous Man, void of Merit, Judgment, Probity, Learning, or Principles. It is very ſurprizing, that an Employment, which requires a Man of Learning, Wiſdom and Piety, one capable of inſtructing and preparing thoſe Wretches for Eternity, ſhould be filled by Perſons that deſerve, perhaps, the Fate of thoſe that are intruſted to their Care.

I ſhall ſay nothing to the 16th Letter, which contains a Deſcription of *London*: I ſhall only add, that 'tis in the Country only, where our People of Diſtinction diſplay their Magnificence. *London* is not the ordinary Place of their Reſidence; and they come not thither, but to attend the Parliament, or about their ordinary Affairs. You now ſee, Sir, what

what I have remarked, in reading over thoſe ſix Letters; which, however, appear to me agreeably written, and full of Spirit. But they muſt be read with Caution in *France*, if we would not form a falſe Idea of the *Engliſh*, of whom the *Swiſs* hath not ſo much drawn a general Character, as deſcribed the Imperfections of ſome particular Perſons. And tho' he ſometimes commends us, yet his Book hath very much diſguſted our Nation. It may, however, be profitable to him; for that Reaſon we ſhould pardon the Author his Injuſtice, and Miſtakes. Pray, Sir, fail not, on your Part, to ſend me what you have remarked defective in his *Letters upon the* French, *&c.*

LETTERS

Written From

PARIS,

ON THE

Subject of LETTERS, concerning the *FRENCH*, and upon TRAVELLING.

LETTER I.

SIR,

"THE Number of Faults you "have remarked in *the Letters* "*upon the* Engliſh, are nothing, "as I take it, in Compariſon "of thoſe I have found in the "*Letters concerning the* French. Of this you "will be a Judge; this ſhall be the Subject, "if you will permit me, of ſeveral Letters, "which I ſhall have the Honour of writing to "you; for ſhould I give you the Whole in this, "I ſhould fatigue my ſelf, and tire you.

"I

" I muſt take notice to you, in the firſt " place, that all is exactly true which I ſhall " not confute in the *Letters upon the* French, " and conſequently, that I believe, that I there " find many Truths: For who can deny our " Abbots, our Ladies, our Men of Buſineſs, " and our *petit Maitres*, to be ſuch as the Au- " thor repreſents them? I cannot ſay, but that " many of his Pictures are very like, and that " many of his Strokes of Satyr are juſt, and well " drawn; as when the Author ſays (for Exam- " ple) *In* France *moſt Part of the Women are Men,* " *and the moſt part of the Men are Women.* One " may find there a hundred other of the like " Reflections, which, to our Diſgrace are too " true. The Article concerning Mode, *pag.* 188. " *tom.* 2. deſerves above all to be read."

But ſee now what I condemn in his *Letters.* I. The Author applies that to the *French*, which is applicable to all other Nations, or, at leaſt, to many other, beſides the *French*: Theſe are general and common Characters, which don't ſpecify us at all. II. Moſt of the Faults, with which the Author reproaches us, are but the Defects of ſome particular Perſons, and have not ſpread themſelves over the whole Nation. III. Many Truths have not been ſufficiently laid open, and I have therefore found Reaſon to add to them. IV. The Author aggravates the Matter too often, and his Reflections are overſtrained; and, V. He advances things in all reſpects abſolutely falſe. I ſhall treat in this Letter only on the firſt Article.

The *French*, according to our Author, are Slaves to the Cuſtoms and Uſages of their Country. *This ſhe does, or this ſhe does not.* Theſe

are the beſt Reaſons, ſays he, one can get in *France*, either for approving or condemning an Action. This is aſſuredly a true Reflection of a Man-hater. I know that Cuſtom, in ſome Senſe, is a Scourge to reaſonable Men; but is it then a Fault to be attached to the Laws and Cuſtoms of the Country where one lives? Should not a Man conform to eſtabliſhed Cuſtoms? Should a *Frenchman* live like a *Spaniard*, an *Italian*, or a *German?* When one ſays, *This is not uſually to be done*, that implies a great deal, and confirms all that can be alledged, to make it apparent to him that he is in the wrong. As for our Sentiments, they ſhould not be regulated by popular Notions; but in our ordinary Conduct, we ſhould conform to the greater Number. This Maxim is obſerved in every Country; and to ſuppoſe a Place where it is not practiſed, is to repreſent a Country where all the fantaſtical and irregular Diſpoſitions of the World have a general Rendezvous, to live there according to their own Caprice, without following any Law, or complying with any Cuſtom. This would be a merry Nation. It is then ridiculous in our Author to ſay, that the *French* make Cuſtom the Queen of their Country, a great Queen, no leſs than their King, the great King; inſomuch, that by this ſervile Attachment to eſtabliſhed Cuſtoms, the *French* have loſt all their Liberty, which now conſiſts in no more than ſitting down in an eaſy Chair, when they are weary, and in other ſuch-like Trifles. I own he hath ſome Reaſon to laugh at the pretended Liberty of the *French*; but if keeping up to Cuſtoms hath cauſed the Loſs of it, all the World labours under the ſame Misfortune.

The

The *French*, ſays he, Pag. 17. are very exact in returning Viſits. *An honeſt Man is not more ſcrupulous of rendring back what hath been depoſited in his Hand, than the* French *are in returning the Viſits that are made them; and one of their chief Employments is, paying and receiving Viſits.* Is there a Country where there are no idle Perſons, who think the Time beſt employed, that they ſpend in the Country? With regard to Viſits of Reſpect, and good Senſe, they are always returned. But in *France*, as elſewhere, a Man of Senſe, that knows how to employ himſelf, makes but two ſorts of Viſits; the Profitable, and the Agreeable. As we are made for Society, theſe are not a little neceſſary to ſupport Life; it may be the happier for them, ſince all our Uneaſineſs ariſes from our Commerce, and Intercourſe with Mankind. See then how we think in *France*; do they think otherwiſe in *Switzerland?* Is there not in all Countries, that which is called, *Knowing how to live?* But if you will believe our Philoſopher, it is not to *know how to live* that we ſeem to *live* in *France*, and that the *French* Politeneſs, every where ſo highly extolled, is but mere Childiſhneſs. Here I am a little tempted to believe our Philoſopher, a Man without Politeneſs, or Breeding. It is true, that *Knowing how to live* in *France*, is not the ſame with *Knowing how to live* in other Countries; but all People have their own way of living: Nay, in every Country, each Profeſſion and Condition, has one peculiar to itſelf. *The Mode of living* with the Peaſant, the Artificer, and the Citizen, is very different from *that* of a Man of Condition. He that knows not how to live, was he a Philoſopher, is not worthy to live.

"I

" If it ſhould happen to a Courtier, a great " Man, continues the Author, to diſpleaſe the " King, and his Majeſty commands him to re- " tire from Court, that is to ſay, to go and " live at his Country-Seat, the ſame Seat that " he hath taken Pains to embelliſh, where he " hath made a delightful Retirement, this is an " Exile he cannot bear; Leiſure and Liberty " make him unhappy." I confeſs, this is a great Weakneſs, and a kind of Folly. The Perſon we call *a great Man*, chooſes rather to be little, to be little at Court, than to keep up his Grandeur at Home, and amongſt his Vaſſals. A Man of Quality, and a Nobleman, ten Leagues in the Country, where he is reſpected, honoured, and even adored, quits his little Kingdom, if I may ſo call it, to make himſelf a Citizen of a great City, and occupy a little Houſe. But ten Paces from him no one knows the Name of the little King that dwells there. He is blended amongſt rich Burghers, and quite obſcured by a proud Financier, whoſe Father was a mean Man, and was, perhaps, formerly a mean Domeſtick to ſome or other of his Family. Such is the fantaſtical Humour of the *French*; and I agree with the Author, that it deſerves our Pity. But with reſpect to diſgraced Courtiers, Favourites baniſhed to their Country-Seats, it is natural to be touched with the like Misfortune; eſpecially in *France*, where they paſſionately love their King, and are extremely ſorry to have the Misfortune to diſpleaſe him. There is no Country in the World, *England* only excepted, where Baniſhment from Court is not a real Puniſhment to a Nobleman. A Philoſopher will ſay, this is a Benefit, this is a Reward; I grant it: But in all Countries, you

you are to distinguish between Courtiers, and they that are truly wise.

Our Author very agreeably rallies the *French*, for the Esteem they have for their own Nation. This is, indeed, the Character of all Countries. Has not every Nation a Value for itself? The *Germans* value themselves, as more judicious and brave than their Neighbours; the *English*, as the most perfect of all People, in their Form of Government, and the Qualifications both of Body and Mind; the *Spaniards*, as the most noble, most generous, and most civil People alive; the *Italians* value themselves, as a very famous Nation, very Polite, Ingenious, Witty, and fruitful of Invention. Will not the *Frenchman* assume to himself some Superiority? Is he to blame to think, that Wit, Taste, and Politeness, abound more in *France* than any where else? The great Men of all Ranks, which that Kingdom hath produced, the Encomiums which Strangers themselves give them; their Bravery, their Conquests, their Success in Trade, the Love they have for Letters, and liberal Arts, all this ought naturally to give a *Frenchman* some Idea of his own Nation. He regards, says the Author, all other People as *Barbarians*, and void of Understanding; he despises them, and 'tis a great Favour, if he will allow them to have common Sense. If some *Frenchmen* judge after this manner, they are themselves Men of no Judgment; and these are the People in all Countries, who ridiculously cry up their own Country, and contemn other People. A Man of Wit in *Spain*, or in *Italy*, is neither a *Spaniard*, or *Italian*, but he is a Man.

What a refin'd Piece of Criticism is this, to discover a sort of Pride in our Politeness, with

reſpect to Strangers? Could not the Author find out that we were polite, but only to make us appear odious? The *French*, ſays he, will allow us to be honeſt Men, and uſe us as Men do their Wives; they treat us as inferior and weak Creatures; to whom ſome Regard is due. *But*, then adds very kindly, *however, this ought not to leſſen the Obligations we have to them, ſince they can diſpenſe with being polite on our Account, and do not receive Pleaſure enough from their Intercourſe with us, to have any Intereſt in obſerving our Rules, or putting any conſtraint upon themſelves for us.* All Nations that entertain Strangers, have not, in reality, the ſame Regard for them as the *French*; but when they would teſtify any Friendſhip, they think with them, that every Stranger hath need of Aſſiſtance. So that the Affection they have for them, if I may ſo ſay, is a kind of Protection. This is what makes our Cenſurer imagine, that we have a Value for Strangers, whom we treat well, *as thinking them weak and inferior Creatures.* He would have ſaid, perhaps, that there is a great deal of Self-love mixed with the Civilities that we pay to Strangers; and that we intend thereby to inſpire them with an Eſteem for us, and make them think us generous and obliging, and give them an Idea of our Politeneſs. This is true; and, in general, it is certain, that a civil, polite, well-bred Man, would be quite otherwiſe than he is, if he could pleaſe by being ill-bred, fierce and brutal.

The Author confeſſes, 'that the *French* have, 'indeed, a well-diſpoſed Heart: This is the Rea-'ſon, ſays he, we find among them the Model 'of true Friendſhip; but here, ſays he, you 'may ſee their fantaſtical Humour: For the 'French do not pretend to value themſelves on

'this

'this Sincerity of Heart. In this Country of 'good People, the Name of *good-natured Man*, 'or *good-natured Woman*, are Affronts, which 'mean only an Idiot, or ignorant Perſon, to 'whom one would not deſire to be compared.' In every Country, the Appellation of a *good-natured Man*, is a Term of Reproach; that is, good Nature carried to a certain Degree, is a Quality that renders a Man credulous, eaſily impoſed on, and makes him a Fool. This Remark then of the *Swiſs*, is frivolous and inſipid; and People will ſtill continue to ſay of a weak and eaſy Perſon, that he is *a good-natured Man*, or ſometimes, *a good-natured Prince*.

I ſhall end this Letter by examining the Commendation he gives a *Frenchman* of Merit. 'A '*Frenchman* of Merit, ſays he, has almoſt the 'ſame Qualities, that deſerving Perſons have 'every where elſe; becauſe there is but one 'kind of true Merit amongſt Men, and he has, 'beſides, all the Agreeableneſs peculiar to the '*French*. One has no great Trouble to gueſs at 'him; his Manners, if I may uſe that Expreſſion, make him tranſparent, and diſcover 'all his Worth; 'tis in him that the Deſire of 'one of the Ancients is accompliſhed, with reſpect to Virtue. We find Virtue, as it were, 'viſible in him, and become paſſionately in 'Love with it. We find ourſelves ſenſibly diſpoſed in Favour of a *Frenchman* of Merit: We 'deſire to be like him, and are grieved that 'the reſt of the World are not. We may believe him without Scruple, and truſt entirely 'to his Word.' So far, as that, I think, he is deſcribing *a Man of Merit* of every Country in the World, when he is Polite, Well-bred, and Affable; and I admire the Goodneſs of the Au-

thor, that he chooſes to place him in *France*, rather than elſewhere. Let us ſee, if in what follows, we ſhall find any more of the *Frenchman*, in this Man of Merit. 'Probity, Honour, 'and Generoſity, appear in him, in ſome meaſure, as in their Original. 'Tis he that diffuſes it among the *French*, and gives them the 'Vogue they have in the World.' That is to ſay, according to this Author, a Man of Merit in other Nations, is of a different Species; which is entirely falſe. Then proceeds to ſay, 'He 'poſſeſſes the good Qualities of his Nation, and 'happily improves every thing in them but 'their Defects, which he rectifies. If he ſhines 'in Converſation, 'tis in ſaying things that are 'obliging, to defend thoſe that are attacked, 'or to act in ſuch a manner, as to make People 'well pleaſed with themſelves. He ſucceeds ſo 'well in this, that every one follows him, well 'ſatisfied with himſelf; this is all they can reproach him with: If he gives too much Attention to Trifles, 'tis becauſe he would not neglect any Occaſion of pleaſing; and he does it 'with ſo good a Grace, that People ſcarce think 'themſelves obliged to him; and it ſeems as if 'he had nothing elſe in View, but to be pleaſed: In a Word, to be an honeſt Man, and to 'pleaſe, is his Profeſſion; he applies himſelf to 'it, and he excels in it, *&c.*'

Is there, in reality, much of the *Frenchman* in this Character? I profeſs, there is. But why does he make honeſt, obliging, complaiſant, charitable Men, to be *Frenchmen*, rather than *Italians*, or *Engliſh*? Do you know nobody, Sir, in *England*, who is adorn'd with theſe Qualities? I can ſee, in that Deſcription, my Lord *L*——, and Sir *G*———. This proves, that this is no more

more the Deſcription of a Man of Merit in *France*, than of one in any other Country whatſoever. Beſides, I find, that the Complaiſance, and Politeneſs of this Man of Merit, borders upon Inſipidneſs. When I meet with Men thus polite, I am tempted to call out for Salt.

I know but one *Frenchman* who hath this kind of affected Merit, which the Author improperly boaſts of, and which he attributes to our Nation. He is a Man noted for the Works he hath publiſhed, of which the greateſt Part are not now much in Eſteem. *This Man of Merit commends every Body; he ſhines in Converſation, by ſaying things that are obliging, and by acting in ſuch a manner, that People may be well pleaſed with themſelves; but he hath really nothing elſe in View but to pleaſe himſelf*, to get Friends and Followers, and to paſs too for *as good an Author*, as he is a *good-natur'd Man*. It is true, that as his Praiſes extend to the whole World, he commends no particular Perſon, and conſequently his Opinion is of no Weight. Being an Enemy to all Criticiſm on Matters of Wit, which he thinks contrary to the Laws of Reaſon and Virtue, he deſpiſes the Talents that dare break through Rules, and cannot bear to have it declared, that a new Piece is a bad one. He hath his Reaſons for laying aſide thoſe auſtere and edifying Rules, and not ſuffering a Criticiſm to be made on any Authors leſs than 4000 Years old; this he authoriſes from his own Example. We muſt, according to him, leave a modern Author, ſtill living, to enjoy his Reputation, tho' ill gotten. 'Tis a publick Treaſure he hath uſurped; no matter, he enjoys it, becauſe he hath gotten the Poſſeſſion of it, and no honeſt Man ought to diſpute it with him. Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, if we be-

believe this Man, is highly blameable, for expoſing many of the Writers of his own Times. It is good, ſays he, to open the Eyes of the Publick; but not at the Expence of the unhappy Author, whom the Criticiſm mortifies, and diſcourages. Notwithſtanding all the fine Harangues of this Teacher of intereſted Charity, he nevertheleſs criticiſes on ridculous Novelties, and conſequently does not ſpare himſelf. Good-natur'd, obliging, and complaiſant as he is, his Morality brings him in nothing, nor is any Perſon affected by it.

I will take the firſt Opportunity, Sir, of ſending you my other Reflections.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

LETTER II.

SIR,

I Shall finiſh in this Letter, what I " promiſed you in my former. I " have ſtill four Articles to ex- " amine.

" When we go about to characterize a Nation, " we ſhould not dwell upon the Qualities of " particular Perſons; yet this is what the Au- " thor of the Letters does. Read his third, that " treats *of the Manners and Converſation of the* " French. And there you have not really " the Character of the *French* in general; but " that of the *Gaſcoins*, or rather of all vain " and ridiculous Perſons, who are common in " all Countries. Nevertheleſs, our Author, with- " out making any Allowance, forms the Cha- " racter of all the *French*, out of the moſt " ſenſeleſs Vanity and Folly. The *French*, if " you believe him, are continually entertain- " ing you with a Detail of their Deſcent, " Wealth, Wit, and Bravery. Your Compa- " ny, in *France*, is compoſed of none but " ſuch as endeavour, by this Method, to make " themſelves valued."

' You may likewiſe imagine, ſays he, how cu- ' rious the Converſation muſt be in a Company, ' where every one thinks he deſerves the Atten- ' tion

'tion of the reſt, and labours for it. Among 'People that have no other View than mutual-'ly to impoſe on one another, Strangers, who, 'they think, may be more eaſily deceived, 'muſt of courſe be well received; and 'tis not 'impoſſible, but that the good Reception met 'with in *France*, may, in ſome meaſure, be 'owing to this.' What is your Opinion, Sir, of this judicious Reflection? If you had never been in *France*, you would take it to be a Country made up of fooliſh, ridiculous Perſons, where Strangers are never well received, but becauſe they are credulous, and are ready to give Attention to the Praiſes every one gives them.

I allow *France*, as well as other Countries, is not without vain and arrogant People; we may judge of that, by ſome of our Modern Authors. One prefers himſelf to *Homer*, *Racine*, and *Fontaine*; becauſe he hath writ a dry Poem, full of Epigrams, ill-contrived Tragedies, in a barbarous Stile, and ill-writ Fables, without Wit or Fancy. Another endeavours to correct the Poet *Deſmarets*; and inſtead of being contented to be equal to him, he inſults all his Cotemporaries of the ſame Profeſſion, and prefers himſelf to the moſt celebrated Poets now living, *&c.* Theſe are *Frenchmen*, I grant; but have we many like theſe? Or do they not ſerve only for a Diverſion, and Jeſt to their Countrymen? Our Philoſopher ſtill further abuſes the *French* Politeneſs, which he looks upon a ſort of *Folly*, and what the *Swiſs* happily avoid. *The Don* Quixots *in Wit and Behaviour*, ſays he, *are as great Fools, as the Don* Quixots *in Courage*. In effect, according to him, the *French* are pleaſed with nothing but Tifles; and this is a Diſpoſition, of all others, the moſt frivolous: But this is rather a Proof,

which

which the Author brings to ſupport his *Theſis*, that the *French* are frivolous and ſenſeleſs. Sure he ſaw none but Women and Coxcombs in *France*, or ſuch as were Extravagant to the laſt Degree, to affirm, that in *France*, *they are pleaſed with nothing but Trifles.*

I find, as I have had the Honour to tell you formerly, many true Things in the Reflections of our Author; but, methinks, ſome Things are not ſufficiently explained and cleared up. I find frequent Falſhood blended with Truth. The Paſſage I am about to recite, will ſerve to illuſtrate this; *pag.* 106. *tom.* 2. you have the following Words.

'There is, in *France*, a Body of Men, choſen out of the People of Wit, the moſt celebrated Writers of the Nation, and who, for their Excellence, aſſume that Name; a Body who make Purity of Stile, and Eloquence, their Buſineſs, and who, by their Superiority of Genius, give Laws to others.' Here he ſpeaks of the *French* Academy, like a true Provincial, or rather rallies them. 'Every one of theſe, ſays he, when he is admitted into their Society, pronounces an Oration, to ſhew, after a new Manner, and *viva Voce*, that he is worthy of their Choice;' but, ſometimes, he makes the contrary appear: The Candidate, however, is ſure to declare, that he is unworthy of the Honour he receives, who, notwithſtanding the Senſe he had of his own Unworthineſs, had made uſe of the moſt preſſing and powerful Sollicitations, to obtain his Place. 'This Oration, continues he, which may ſerve as a Pattern for others, and ſhews, upon what an Orator is principally to exerciſe himſelf with a good Grace, ought to contain Encomiums on

'the Living and the Dead. They commend, 'as by a Decree, Men already extolled, and whoſe Praiſes are to be celebrated from time 'to time; and, indeed, they praiſe them as if 'they were paid for it.' The Reflection of the Author is almoſt as comical, as the Cuſtom he ridicules; then he adds, 'They, who thus cele-'brate the Praiſes of others, have them alſo in 'their turn from others; and theſe learned 'Men placed, as at the Head of the *French* Na-'tion, will, doubtleſs, exerciſe themſelves in an 'Habit, that is invented to praiſe, and is to con-'ſiſt in the Celebration of an Action, the moſt 'Noble that human Wit is capable of. It is 'more to be feared, they don't entertain their 'Countrymen with *Antitheſes*, and fine Lan-'guage.' As to what follows, our Cenſurer, who thus ridicules the *French* Academy, could not deny, but many of its Members were Perſons worthy of Reſpect, both on account of their high Birth, and eminent Stations in the World. The Academy, by introducing ſo many Noblemen into its Body, has taken good Care of the Intereſt of the Men of Letters that compoſe it. A Maxim, that brings to my Memory a half-Line of *Ines de Caſtro*, *Let the great ones enter.*

The Author reproaches the Members of the Academy, for living upon Incenſe. 'Tis true, when we are preſent at their publick Aſſemblies, we are commonly entertained with Elogies on the Living and the Dead. There you hear the Praiſes of *Lewis* XIV. Cardinal *Richelieu*, the whole Body of the Academy, the learned Society that have been, and the preſent Members of it, *&c.* It is a fine and well-choſen Incenſe: But we have always the ſame; we are all over perfumed

perfumed by it, and ſo penetrated by its Odours, that when we go out, we ſhould have a great Care, how we take the Air, to prevent Accidents. The Cuſtom of Panegyrick, which the Author ſo much reproaches the Academy with, is, nevertheleſs, very valuable in its Original. The firſt Members of the Academy, full of Gratitude to their generous Founders, and illuſtrious Protectors, made a Statute, which the preſent Members think it their Duty to obſerve, notwithſtanding the Inconveniencies they diſcover in it themſelves; which ſhews, they prefer Gratitude to all other Conſiderations, ſince they ſacrifice to it good Senſe, the publick Taſte, and, perhaps, their own too: To profeſs themſelves unworthy of the Honour they receive, to acknowledge the diſtinguiſhing Merit of all thoſe to whom they are aſſociated, to hope for a communication of their ſuperior Lights, to teſtify that they have long ſince aſpired to that high Dignity; after that, to praiſe the late King, and the Cardinal, to beſtow great Encomiums on the deceaſed, whom they ſucceed, are the ordinary Topicks of the ingenious Orations of thoſe that are newly admitted into the *French* Academy. I confeſs, it would be much better, if the Perſon elected on thoſe Occaſions, was at liberty to chooſe his Subject, only bringing into his Oration, ſome civil Addreſs to the Academy, handſomely thanking them for their Choice. This is what is done in the other Academies of *Paris*, eſpecially that of *Polite Learning*. To paint the Member of the Academy one ſucceeds, in true and natural Colours, is what will certainly be approved of: But how inſipid muſt it be, to have our Ears filled with the Praiſes of a publick Miniſter, that died 24 Years ſince, and

whoſe great Qualities every one knows? The Praiſes of *Lewis* XIV. have been ſo often celebrated, that how juſt ſoever they may be that are ſtill given him, they appear, at leaſt, inſignificant. The Tribute, then, to be required of a young Academiſt, might be changed. This is a kind of offering Incenſe, that hath no End: For the elected Member hath ſcarce paid what he was to offer, but it is returned to him upon the Spot. Was he a bad Author; 'twill be ſaid, his Way of writing is always good. Has he writ nothing? he hath a great Talent, a fine Genius; he is a Member of the Academy.

I cannot, however, condemn their faithful Obſervance of their antient Statutes. 'Tis for this Reaſon only, that I approve of that Rule obſerved in the *French* Academy, which preſcribes, that none be admitted into their Body, that have not canvaſſed or ſollicited for it. It is true, that, as in this the Honour of the Academy is only conſidered, ſo, by this Rule, all humble and modeſt Perſons are, in a manner, excluded: But this Statute is antient, and founded upon Reaſon. Another Statute enjoyns, that to be admitted, you muſt neceſſarily have publiſhed ſome Piece: As this Statute is not very important in the Eſteem of our Academy, there is no great Harm in breaking through it ſometimes, in favour of ſome Perſons, for whoſe Admittance there are ſufficient Motives, without the ſuperfluous Merit of being an Author. I have been, I fear, too prolix on the Article of the *French* Academy. Perhaps, Sir, you know nothing of all this in *England*.

The Article of the *Bookſellers* of the Palace, (*Pag.* 152.) who offer their Books to Paſſengers, that is, The *Mercury Gallant*, *the Works of the Country*,

Country, *the Courtier*, &c. This Article is ſuper-annuated; there are no ſuch Books offered now-a-days, but the Works of the Abbot de *B*——— *Ingenious Varieties*, *the Courtiers Library*, *the Sallies of Wit*, *the Univerſal Man*, *the Hero*, *the Revolutions in* Spain, *the new Clovis*, *new Fables*, *the Iliad in Verſe*, and other ſuch Drugs. See the Books which Meſſieurs the Bookſellers commonly ſhew to Strangers, Countrymen, and to thoſe, whoſe Air and Countenance diſcover their Taſte, and Underſtanding: For they avoid preſenting ſuch Books to Perſons, whom they take to be Men of Underſtanding. You will ſay, that they can diſtinguiſh the Knowing, from the Ignorant; our Author, ſeems to judge of the moſt Part of our Books, by thoſe which were offered to him in the Palace; and we muſt believe from thence, that we have none but frivolous Pieces, trifling Hiſtories, Romances, Songs upon Trifles, mere Nothings.

What an Exaggeration is here, or rather a Diſorder of Mind? What, are the Works of our Mathematicians, Philoſophers, of the Academies of Sciences, and polite Learning, mere Trifles? Our Books of Morality and Controverſy, our Searches into ſacred and prophane Hiſtory, our Works of Eloquence, our Plays, that are excellent in their kind, are they very Nothings! Where were born *Gaſſendi*, *Deſcartes*, *Malebranche*, *Petau*, *Sirmond*, *Morin*, *Boſſuet*, *Fenelon*, *Paſcal*, and *Tillemont*, and an infinite Number of other Writers, a Liſt of whom would make up a large Volume, and muſt ſilence our ignorant Critick, who dares to imagine, that all our Books are reduced to the *Mercury Gallant*, to Books of Friendſhip and Amours, to ſome Romances, Tales of Fairies, and amorous Poems?

This

This is apparently the whole Catalogue, that makes up the *French* Library, of the *Swiſs*.

This Pedantick Deciſion of the Author, I own, provoked my Anger. I ſhall now make ſome more moderate Reflections on the 15th and 16th Letters, tho', in them, I have found many things extravagant, and, at the ſame time, falſe. Yet, I muſt firſt acknowledge, that I am charmed with the Beginning of his fifteenth Letter, that treats of the Definition, and the Diſtinction of *Good Senſe*, and *Wit*; I ſhall always call, with the Author, Wit, a delicate kind of good Senſe, rather than *a ſparkling good Senſe*, as Father *Bohours* hath defined it; and you ſhall never find a true Wit, void of Judgment. I allow him to abuſe *Balzac* and *Scarron*, and to ſay they have no real Wit: Their Works are ſufficiently neglected in *France*, and ſo had no need of the Author's Criticiſm; but I can't bear his paſſing the like Judgment upon *Saruſin*, and *Voiture*: Nor can I ſuffer him to ſay, that our Tragedies leſſen the Eſteem of Virtue. 'Tragick Poets, ſays he, 'diſplay Virtue; but in ſuch an extraordinary 'Sphere, and ſo diſtant from what is common 'and familiar, and they know ſo well how to 'turn it into fine Words, and lofty Sentiments, 'that they make a kind of Proportion between 'the Play and Virtue. The Audience finding 'it become a *Theſis*, the magnificent Sport of 'Wit, accuſtom themſelves to look upon it, as 'it were, made for that Purpoſe. Thus Virtue 'becomes a Shew, exhibited to the Curioſity of 'the People, an Object for the Stage, from 'whence Men baniſh her; and all thoſe lofty 'Sentiments appear to them to be as far diſtant 'from common Life, as the Apparel and Attitudes of the Stage, are from thoſe they wear

'at

' at Home.' All this is true: No-body pretends that Tragedy will intirely reform a corrupt, vicious Man; but we may ſay, that it elevates the Soul, gives Men a great Opinion of Virtue, and makes Vice odious. This is a good Effect, which it always produces. As to an immediate Influence on our Practice, Tragedy does not extend to that; becauſe, then it would be neceſſary it ſhould deſtroy all the Obſtacles, that have been formed in us by evil Habits. ' Love alone, ' which, generally ſpeaking, is the eſſential ' Part of theſe Repreſentations, and in which ' all the Performances of the Stage center, and ' aſſiſt each other; Love, which is moſt ſuitable ' to the Inclinations of Youth, has its Effect in ' theſe Plays, which were invented for them, ' and communicates itſelf in good Earneſt. On ' this Account, eſpecially, it may be ſaid, that ' Tragedy is miſchievous; it debaſes the Good, ' by mixing it with the Bad, with *Love*, as it ' authoriſes the Bad, by making it go hand in ' hand with the Good.' But can our Author, who is a Philoſopher, be ignorant, that Love hath nothing bad in its own Nature; he muſt mean then, that it is ſo only, when it is fixed upon unlawful Objects. Every Body knows, that the firſt Rule of Tragedy, is never to offer an irregular Paſſion, with reſpect to the Object, as for Inſtance, one that is vicious and criminal. Our *French* Theatre is alſo ſo nice in that Point, that an Amour of a married Man is never ſuffered to be brought upon the Stage, and very rarely one of an unmarried Man, with a married Woman. Whenever that happens, there are all poſſible Precautions taken; and here the Poet's Art is moſt diſcovered, as we have lately ſeen in the Tragedy of *Mariamne*.

What

What our Cenſurer ſays of *Rabelais*, is a little ſevere. 'Here, ſays he, we muſt not look for 'Relations; for the Pleaſure of his Wit was to 'deſtroy them, and to publiſh a Work that was 'inferiour to Man's Condition, and, by a myſte-'rious Appearance, which he gave it, was 'thought to be above it.' It is, with ſome Reaſon, however, that they do honour, in *France*, to that Author, and eſteem him as one of their beſt Writers, in ſpite of the Obſcenities, the Enigmas, Extravagancies, and mad Rants, which we find in his *Pantagruel*. What a Genius, what Art muſt it require, to diſguiſe the moſt ſublime and important Matters, under the Appearance of Meanneſs and Folly? This is a Comick-writer, in a ſingular and inimitable Kind.

See now three of our Authors, which our Philoſopher extremely diſparages, *Deſpreaux*, *M. de Fontenelle*, and *Bayle*. With reſpect to the two firſt, we cannot well tell what he would ſay: For a Man muſt be abſolutely deprived of all good Taſte, nor have the leaſt Underſtanding, to ſpeak of *Deſpreaux*, as this Author does: Nor can we eaſily know *Fontenelle*, by the Picture which he draws of him: And as he does not name him, we are in doubt, whether that be the Perſon he has in View. When he ſpeaks of *M. Bayle*, he obſerves no Meaſures at all. 'He 'took it into his Head, ſays he, to drain all his 'Knowledge, and to diſcharge it into a large 'Book of Criticiſm, to entertain the Curious.' 'Tis thus our modern *Apedentes* ſpin out their Learning, which, however, is a great Ornament to the Mind. 'This Author, continues he, can 'demonſtrate, how far a Man, that is defective 'in the Sentiments of his Heart, may go aſtray 'thro' Wit.' That is to ſay, that Mr. *Bayle* was

a corrupt and vicious Man, which is an horrid Accuſation, and requires good Proof. 'The Body 'of the Book,' ſays he, ſpeaking of the *critical Dictionary*, 'is a Wonder of itſelf, for the ma- 'ny idle and impertinent Things, which an a- 'greeable Stile, a natural and ingenious Turn, 'make us value, and admire. 'Tis the Work in 'the World, where the Men, *that run after Wit*, 'thoſe that have a Mind to be amuſed, and *de- 'ceived*, are beſt fitted. This frightful Volume, 'this Mountain of a Book, after making great 'Outcries in a Preface that matches it exactly, 'and may excuſe a Man of Underſtanding from 'reading the Work, brings forth nothing more 'than a Mouſe, or rather a whole Brood, that 'creeps every where to gnaw and ſpoil.——— 'Let us ſay boldly, that the Author of the '*Critical Dictionary*, is a *Quack*; being decked 'with vain-glorious Erudition, a Heap of Facts, 'and Circumſtances, *that never deſerved to be 'taken notice of by a Man of Senſe*, he attracts 'the Eyes of the World, *&c.*' You may ſee the reſt of his Deſcription, *Pag.* 54. I will not pretend to juſtify Mr. *Bayle*, in relation to Religion; but he muſt be quite void of all Taſte of good Writing, that can ſpeak ſo contemptibly of an immenſe Work, that forces us to admire the prodigious Learning of the Author, and his agreeable Manner of handling the various Subjects which he treats of. I grant, there are ſome contemptible Things, and many Miſtakes in his *Critical Dictionary*, which the Compiler wrote too haſtily: But does he for that deſerve all thoſe outrageous Reproaches of the *Swiſs*? He is a Philoſopher, a *Quietiſt*, who can reliſh nothing but Books of Morality: Therefore he does Juſtice to the *Characters* of *Bruyere*, the mo-

ral Reflections of the Duke *de Rochefoucault*, to *Telemachus*, and the Fables of *Fontaine*: The Judgment he gives upon thoſe Books, is very rational.

The Author, ſure, hath not the leaſt Idea of the *French* Taſte, if he pretends, that what he advances in Page 73, be true. 'The Stile, ſays 'he, independantly of what it expreſſes, is a 'Matter of great Importance, and highly va-'lued in *France*. There is no room to doubt, 'but that to moſt Readers, a Book, that ſays no-'thing in a florid Stile, is the Book to be read, 'rather than one that ſays the beſt, even divine 'Things, in a mean Stile.' 'Tis true, a Book ill writ, in *France*, always paſſes for a bad Book, for this Reaſon; becauſe, an Author that writes ill, has but confuſed Ideas, and always bad Reaſoning: For to deliver one's Thoughts confuſedly, is to reaſon ill, and one may have Reaſon, and not reaſon well. Therefore, an Author that reaſons ill, whoſe Thoughts are neither well methodized, nor clearly diſcovered, deſerves not to be read; but this is not ſaying, that the Stile is the Whole of a Book: For one may reaſon well, and yet be in the Wrong. But what does the Author mean by a *fine Stile*? A Book compoſed of well-choſen, and harmonious Words, which, *in a beautiful Stile, ſays nothing*; this is certainly, in the Opinion of the *French*, a very deſpicable Book. In a Word, a good Book is never ill writ; but a very bad Book, is, ſometimes, writ with Purity and Elegance; and, in a Word, in a *Beautiful Stile*. '*A fine* '*Stile*, ſays our *Swiſs*, and *the Approbation of the* '*Publick*, are the two Things, which, in *France*, 'increaſe the Number of bad Authors.' I anſwer, that a *Fine Stile*, in the Author's Senſe, and

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the Approbation of the Publick, are two Things which never went together, and by no Means increaſe the Number of bad Authors, as he affirms. The Number of bad Books, writ in a florid Stile, is very ſmall; one cannot eaſily give a Liſt of them. I make my Acknowledgements to certain Authors, who take notice of this.

I find very little Juſtice in the Remarks of our *Swiſs*, upon the 16th Satyr of Mr. *Deſpreaux*. What he offers upon the Subject of Rhimes, is fantaſtical and inſipid. As to what follows, the whole World knows, that the firſt Pieces of that Poet, were ſomewhat mean. The Author is miſtaken, if he imagines, that we regard his firſt Productions, as Models of good Writing. It is by a ſmall Number of his *Satyrs*, his *Epiſtles*, his *Lutrin*, and his *Art of Poetry*, that we equal Mr. *Deſpreaux* to the Antients, that is, to *Horace*, and *Juvenal*, and prefer him to all the Moderns, who have, perhaps, a more ſparkling Genius than him; but who have neither his Judgment, nor Taſte, and come far ſhort of him in what we call *Wit*. Our Authors, at this very Time, value themſelves, for having much of it; they call that *Wit*, which pleaſes: The *New*, the *Bold*, the *Agreeable*, the *Convincing*, and the *Exuberant*, &c. But never call by that Name, the Noble, the Natural, the Judicious, the Simple. Alas! Sir, *Wit* comes to us, and Taſte proceeds from us, *&c.*

I ſhall add ſome more Reflections on this Treatiſe of the *Swiſs*. He praiſes the Nation in general, and ſays, the *French* prejudice you in their Favour, that they are obliging, civil, and ſeem born for Society; but if you obſerve them well, according to him, they are only beautiful

in Appearance. Vivacity, for which they have ſo great an Eſteem, and regard as the diſtinguiſhing Character of their Nation, is but a falſe Brightneſs, that dazzles at firſt, and is offenſive at laſt; becauſe, a Man of good Senſe does not content himſelf with bare Appearances, and is diſpleaſed, to find nothing that anſwers his Expectation. From thence proceeds, ſays he, that Averſion Strangers ſhew to the favourable Reception of the *French*; becauſe, we naturally hate thoſe that impoſe upon us. No Man, ſurely, ever read the like Concluſion. He hates us, becauſe we are Polite, Courteous, Civil and obliging, and when he hath thoroughly ſtudied us, he finds no Fund of ſufficient Merit to anſwer the foregoing good Qualities. I would aſk of thoſe who hate the *French* Nation, of thoſe *little Wits* that declaim againſt Nations in general, whether, in Effect, our Politeneſs be the Cauſe of their Diſlike? It ſeems quite otherwiſe; it is rather a falſe Idea they have, that we would lord it over all People, and have mean Thoughts of them. It is true, perhaps, that the *French*, among Strangers, have a ſuperior and predominant Air; and that this, 'tis ſaid, is what hath been particularly remarked at *Rome*.

The Author both condemns and deſpiſes the *French* Vivacity; but it plainly appears, that he knows not what it is; He ſhould then be informed. 'Tis not that, by which, with a Caſt of the Eye, a Man can penetrate into the Bottom of Things, which directs us to our *End* in an Inſtant, which cauſes us to ſee, at firſt, an infinite Number of Conſequences at one Time; and, in Truth, all the Principles, on which it depends. It is that which ſuggeſts to us, in one Word, a deciſive Proof, and an Anſwer, without

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a Reply; which dictates to us our ſprightly Repartees, and prevents the Length of Reaſoning and Meditation, and ſuddenly lays hold of the Eſſentials of any Thing. This is what the *Romans* called *Acies Mentis*. 'Tis this makes us Active, Diligent and Laborious, full of Ardor and Courage, and Indefatigable in Enterpriſes. I know, this Vivacity, void of Regularity of Spirit, and good Senſe, hurries us into numberleſs Miſtakes. It ſhould, therefore, be cultivated by Reflection, by Reading, and by Experience. But will the *Swiſs* ſay, that the Vivacity of the *French*, is void of all Judgment? If he ſays that, we ſhall not condeſcend to anſwer him. There are, 'tis true, in *France*, many lively and ſuperficial Spirits; but as the *Swiſs* grants, that Vivacity is a Quality ſingular to the *French*, I affirm, that until he proves that this Vivacity hath nothing in it that is Solid, and Judicious, that that Quality itſelf ought to be regarded as a very excellent one. 'Tis owing to the want of this, that the Northern Nations have, hitherto, made ſo ſmall a Progreſs in Arts and Sciences; that they have (to uſe the Expreſſion) but feeble Wings, not active enough to mount; that their Movement is ſlow, and their Efforts weak, and cannot acquire, by the ſolid Unactivity of their Judgment, thoſe Accompliſhments, which the *Italians* and *French* attain, by the Sprightlineſs of their Imagination.

A certain Preſumption, the *Swiſs* affects to attribute to the *French* in general, is another of his unjuſt Reproaches. 'Tis well known, that Nation is eſteemed in moſt Countries, and is valued by their very Enemies. We have our Defects; Defects that Cuſtom, and the Spirit that reigns in *France*, generally ſpeaking, will not ſuffer

ſuffer us to correct to this Day: We know what they are, and know how to comfort ourſelves under them. We find the like too in all other Nations, and, at the ſame time, allow them to have Qualities ſuperiour to our own. This is, then, our Preſumption; we ſay the *Engliſh*, in general, ſurpaſs us in Penetration, and Depth of Reaſoning; that we have not ſo good a Talent, at Invention, as the *Germans*; tho' we have a better in bringing to Perfection, which is much ſuperiour to the former: We own, the *Italians* excel us in the politer Arts, as Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, Muſick, and Shows; but, however, that we come very near them in all theſe. We commend the *Swiſs*, for their Courage, Fidelity, and Probity, and paſs a very favourable Judgment on all the Nations about us. Theſe are the common Notions, you may find diſperſed through all *France*. As to a fine Taſte in all Things, we attribute it to ourſelves, with the ſame Sincerity, as we declare other Nations excel us in different Reſpects. And 'tis certain, they do us Juſtice, as to that Particular, and many others. And whatever our hot, and angry Man-hater may ſay, the *French* are not generally hated by Strangers, as he would have it believed. The mutual Hatred of Nations, is always founded on Prejudice and popular Views, and ſubſiſts no where, but amongſt the common People. It is very ſtrange, ſo ſublime a Philoſopher, ſhould endeavour to diſcover right Reaſon, in a Prejudice ſo diſgraceful to Humanity.

But, to lay ſerious Arguing aſide, let us now, a little, laugh at the *Swiſs*, penſive and full of Meditation, who, from the Top of the *Alps*, and the Height of his Spirit, regards the *French* as *Atomes*, exhales his Ill-Humour, in Letters full

full of Sophiſtry, and inſinuates, that all our Virtues proceed from our Vices; as all the Vices of the *Engliſh* proceed from their Virtues. This is the Difference he makes between *the Letters upon the* Engliſh *and the* French. Don't you complain; your Nation is not ſo much abuſed as ours; you may applaud your ſelves for your Vices, and we may bluſh for our Virtues.

If the Author judges of the Merit of his Reflections, by the happy Sale of his Book, he hath room to value it, and to rejoyce at the printing it; but he knows, there is no Country in the World where Satyr is better received, than in *France*. Some happy Strokes diſperſed through his Letters; and a true Deſcription of ſome ridiculous Men, now living, who are more lively, and finely cenſured by *Moliere*, in his Comedies, than in the Book he hath publiſhed; his Criticiſms, whether good or bad, on ſome of our Authors, *Scarron* for Example, whom he makes a Diſgrace to our Nation, for eſteeming Burleſque Writing, tho' theſe Trifles have diverted the *French* but for a little Time; his bold Cenſure of ſo great a Man as *Bayle*; ſome ſolid Reaſonings, but attended by falſe Concluſions; ſome profound Reflections, but ſuch as affect the *French* no more, than they do the *Greeks* or *Romans*; a conſtant Endeavour to byaſs the Mind of the Reader; all this appeared new, and hath pleaſed. Beſides, there is a Spirit through the Whole; you may perceive a fruitful and ſprightly Imagination, a lively and particular Stile, that pleaſes; eſpecially, in a *Swiſs*: In a thouſand Places you find Metaphyſicks, that affect you; exact Morality; with a ſharp, poignant, and new kind of Satyr.

Here,

Here, Sir, you have my Thoughts, and the Thoughts of many judicious Perſons, concerning *the Letters upon the* French.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR,

"I Continue to write to you, on the "Subject of the *Swiſs* Performance, "and I will lay before you Part "of my Reflections, upon his Let-"ter *about Travelling*. I muſt tell you, at firſt, "that I read it with ſome Pleaſure, as we read "Pieces of Genius, and Satyr. The End of the "Author, in this Letter, is chiefly to demon-"ſtrate the Truth of this Maxim, That by "Travelling, a Perſon ſeldom becomes the bet-"ter Man.

Cœlum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt.

"This is a Traveller, that declaims againſt "the Abuſe of Travelling, and endeavours to "juſtify a Country, and a ſedentary Life, "which he embraces at his Return. This Let-"ter, how ingenious ſoever it may be, appears

"full

" full of falſe Reaſonings, and of Paradoxes ill " proved."

It is plain, that Travelling ſerves very much to the forming of young Men; Experience proves it: But obſerve the Reaſoning of the *Swiſs*. ' The Change which we obſerve, ſays ' he, in thoſe that have travelled, is no more, ' generally, than the paſſing from one Period of ' Life to another, and never from a bad Cha- ' racter to a good one; and it does not make ' any Alteration in the Mind of Man.' He adds too, ' That it may be with Men, as with ' Fruits; they have their Seaſons, they are ' green, and they ripen.' That is, according to our Philoſopher, Nature needs not attend to Education; a Man, by his Reflections, and the good Uſe of his Reaſon, labours to no Purpoſe, to deſtroy his evil Inclinations; and if he becomes better than he was, it is a Change that Time ought neceſſarily to bring about. It is certain that Age improves us, and without putting us to any Pains, wears off many of our Defects; *Multa adimunt anni venientes:* But when we concur with Time, if I may ſo ſpeak, and aſſiſt her with our Reflections, our Defects go off much ſooner. You may do as you pleaſe; a young Man, born with a great many Faults, will never be perfect. Reaſon, Age, and Experience, will reform him a little; but his Nature will always be predominant. But muſt we, therefore, ſay, that 'tis needleſs to beſtow Education upon a young Man? Is it not worth our while to have weakened his Paſſions, ſoftened the Roughneſs and Violence of his Diſpoſition, and ſomewhat poliſhed his Mind, and to have accuſtomed him to put a Reſtraint upon himſelf

on ſome Occaſions? This is the Effect of Education; and when Time comes to its Aſſiſtance, Nature is forced to yield.

Certainly, Travels are excellent Leſſons, and mightily contribute to the Education of a young Man. When he is at Home, he either has Liberty, or has not. If he hath not Liberty, and his Parents, or Maſters, keep him under, he will be dull, melancholy, and moroſe; his Temper will be ſoured, and he will retain his Faults, or increaſe them. If it be thought proper to leave him entirely free, and abandon him to himſelf, he will follow his Paſſions, purſue criminal Pleaſures, and fall into dangerous Acquaintance. How difficult is it to keep a young Gentleman in ſuch a Situation, that he may neither be too much at Liberty, nor too much conſtrained? But if you ſend him to travel, under the Conduct of a polite and underſtanding Perſon, he enjoys the Liberty all young Perſons aim at, and that Liberty hath no Inconveniencies attending it. He can form no particular Intimacy, while he is travelling, which is commonly the Occaſion of the Depravation of the Manners of young Men, at their coming into the World. Add to this, that his Mind is conſiderably improved, by ſeeing various Countries, and Objects, one after another; and by examining the Cuſtoms, Laws, Manners, Virtues, and Vices of different Nations. For nothing is better fitted to diſſipate the Prejudices we are born with, and make a Man think. Then the Heart forms itſelf proportionably with the Mind. 'Twas this made *Ulyſſes* ſo wiſe and virtuous.

Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, & urbes.

Yet

Yet for all this, according to our Philoſopher, a young Man may, much better, correct his Faults, by a quiet and retired Life. 'Tis granted; but doth ſuch a kind of Life agree, for the moſt Part, with young Gentlemen? Do they not want Action, and Exerciſe? The Author, *Page* 143, begins to put us off with mere Fuſtian, upon the Subject of the moral Eſſence of Man, and of that which conſtitutes Humanity. 'Travelling, ſays he, plainly proves, that Humanity is loſt, ſince we go upon the Search into the World, without knowing what we ſeek for.'

But here you may obſerve, that our Author is not afraid to maintain, that Travelling, inſtead of improving the Mind, ſerves only to corrupt it; he thus proves his Paradox: 'It is upon the Mind, ſays he, that Travelling ſhould chiefly operate, by affording it continual Opportunities of Improvement; but this Employment, beſides the accuſtoming us to value ourſelves upon what we term Wit, and therein center all our Merit (which is far from a good Character; we form this Wit upon no other Model than the general one, which is not the beſt Method;) it throws us upon Imitation, which never produces any thing Great or Noble; it cauſes us to conſider a Turn of Wit, (as it is called) as a Matter of mighty Importance, and occaſions our aſſuming what is none of our own, and which is neither convenient for, nor belongs to us: For the ſame Reaſon, a young Man ought never to ſee the World; ſince that *would throw him into Imitation.*' So that young Gentlemen of the diſtant Provinces, ſhould never come to make any Stay at *Paris*; they had much better abandon

themſelves to their own natural Diſpoſition, and guard, as much as poſſible, againſt every thing, that may render them Imitators of polite and well-bred Perſons. Our Author then continues thus: 'In ſubjecting our Mind to a cer-'tain Point, and in accuſtoming it to conſider 'what is preſented to it, only after a certain re-'ceived and faſhionable Manner, we confine and 'limit it while it is in its Production, and di-'vert it from what it might produce new of 'itſelf, and in which its true Beauty conſiſts, 'and from Liberty of Thought, wherein Vi-'gour conſiſts.' Is it not, on the contrary, in Travelling through different Countries, that we more eaſily wear off the Power of Prejudice, when we no longer eſteem the Cuſtoms of the Country where we were born, as neceſſary Laws, and acquire a true Liberty of thinking upon every thing? Would to God that Liberty may be never carried too far: For 'tis remarkable, that they who have travelled much, and have ſeen, almoſt, all the different Religions that are in the World, are diſpoſed to conſider their own, as they do that of other People's. The happy Prejudice of their Birth and Education is effaced, and they believe themſelves no better eſtabliſhed in their Worſhip, than ſo many other wiſe Nations, who adore the ſovereign Being, every one after their own Way.

'But why, ſays our *Swiſs*, are we ſo much 'concerned about the forming the Mind? It is 'not unlikely, but that the interior, as well as 'the exterior Part of Man, may be of ſuch a 'Nature, as to be able to form and diſplay itſelf, 'without requiring any further Aſſiſtance than 'that of Truth and Reality, together with the 'Converſation of ſome Perſons of Senſe and 'Judgment,

'Judgment, in order to ſtrengthen it, and to 'inure it to execute its Functions. Nothing is 'required, but what is eaſy to be obtained, and 'what every one meets with in his own Coun-'try.'

Is it not then really an Abuſe, *to take ſo much Pains in forming the Mind?* The Compariſon the *Swiſs* makes, between the Body and the Mind, is very juſt; I will now make uſe of it. Yes, it is needleſs to exerciſe the Body, to faſhion it, to inſtruct it how to move gracefully, to keep itſelf upright, to bow well, to mount a Horſe, and to handle Arms, *&c.* All this comes of itſelf, without the Help of *Imitation*, that is to ſay, the Aſſiſtance of Maſters; from whence the Author very judiciouſly concludes, that it is the ſame Thing with the Mind, and that 'tis unneceſſary to exerciſe and cultivate it: In effect, if it wants any Improvements, according to him, it is to be found *in one's own Country*, without ſearching for it abroad.

Let the Country Gentleman then carefully mind his Son, and not let him loſe Sight of his Pariſh Steeple. Let the *Perigordin*, the *Low-Britain*, thoſe of *Mauceau*, and *Auvernac*, ſtay where they are. Theſe will be your deſirable Men; Men *bred up in Truth*, who will not be confined in their Thoughts, but poſſeſs, like the *Swiſs*, in an eminent Degree, the *Liberty of thinking*.

The Mind, ſays he, without ordinary Aſſiſtances, and left to its proper Force, may have ſomething in it deformed, according to the common Notion of it; but in that is its original State, it exalts itſelf, and dares penetrate into Things, becauſe they ſeem to have ſomething eſſential in them. On the contra-

ry,

ry, it ſeems to me, that the Mind, abandoned to itſelf, and deſtitute of Aſſiſtance, will not only be deformed, but very barren, and its Views very narrow. Is it not this that makes the difference between Citizens, and thoſe who live in the Country, between Perſons that never go out of their own Province, and thoſe that have ſpent the younger Part of their Time in *Paris*, or in ſome of the great Cities? The *Pariſian* himſelf, who never goes out of that Capital, makes but a mean Figure. But does this Example favour the Opinion of the Author? Let us recollect, that in *Virgil's* firſt Eclogue, *Tityrus* thought *Rome* reſembled *Mantua*: You See then, how he that never goes out of his own *Country*, *conſiders Things*; *becauſe they ſeem to have ſomething eſſential in them.* Let us ſay, rather, that he is always captivated by the Prejudices of his Country, that he eſteems the Notions he imbibed there, as Principles; that he adopts, without difficulty, all the Opinions that are current among his Neighbours; that he embraces what they receive, and rejects what they reject. In Travelling we find the contrary, or, at leaſt, in converſing with Travellers, and reading their Account of Things, (which is Travelling in ſome Senſe) we correct our Errors and Prejudices, by which our Reaſon becomes ſound, and preſumes to examine and enquire into the Nature of Things, and by which we attain to the Knowledge of *what is eſſential in every thing*; which the prevailing Opinion of our own Country often deprives us of.

The Qualities of the Heart, continues he, *admit of our having thoſe of the Mind, and ſufficiently adorn, where they rectify and perfect us.* This is true: But to be a Man of Merit, it is not ſufficient

cient to have the Qualities of the Heart, but to have added to them thoſe of the Mind alſo; without them, a Man may be an honeſt Man, but one of narrow Views, and inſipid. *A Man*, continues he, *muſt abound in good Qualities, to have the Ornaments of the Mind agree with him; as none but Fields and Gardens are adorned with Flowers.* 'Tis true, there is nothing which becomes, nothing which does honour to a Man void of the good Qualities of the Heart. He may have many excellent Talents, either of Mind or Body; yet if he want Virtue and Wiſdom, he is a contemptible Perſon. From hence 'tis to be inferred, that we ſhould endeavour firſt to form the Heart; but to attain to that we muſt cultivate the Mind. It is a chief Ingredient in the Character of the Mind, that it is the Principal of all our Actions.

A Knowledge of the World, is the chief Benefit Men reap by Travelling. 'That Knowledge, 'replies the *Swiſs*, is needleſs; it is better to 'know a Man, than his Mask; the true Springs 'of his Diſcourſe and Actions, rather than his 'Outſide, and the Part that he acts.' 'Tis true; but we are obliged to live with, and act among a Thouſand of theſe Gentlemen in Masks; we ſhould then be able to act our Part as well as they. This is that Knowledge of the World, which is neceſſary for our Conduct in Life, and living happily. It carries with it an intelligent diſcerning Spirit, which penetrates into the Heart of Man; becauſe we know the Hearts of Men by their Actions. If they impoſe on us, our Knowledge of the World prevents our being entirely made Fools of, as they ordinarily are who have it not, and live altogether like Philoſophers. The *Swiſs* then is plainly miſtaken in his

his Notions, when he asks, Why the Knowledge of the World does ſo great Honour to thoſe that have it, ſince the World is confeſſed to be only a ſuperficial Thing? The World, that is, the Men in it: The knowing of Men then, is to have the Knowledge of the World. Obſerve, now, what may be juſtly reply'd to him.

Travelling is profitable for learning of Languages: This our Philoſopher owns; but ridicules thoſe who apply themſelves to learn them. The Study of Languages, ſays he, is an Abuſe; becauſe of the Shortneſs of Life. It is (ſays he, with Juſtneſs enough) as if an Artificer ſtraitned in Time, and having but one Day to do his Work, ſhould ſpend all the Morning in making other Tools, than what he already had, and which he might well enough make uſe of. In this he ſpeaks rationally: But he does not confine his Cenſure to the Study of Languages only; he extends it to all kinds of Study, and reading. You need not read, according to him, but as much as is neceſſary for a little Inſtruction, to diſſipate our tedious Moments, and give ſome Nouriſhment to the Soul, when it languiſhes. Thoſe Reaſoning of the *Swiſs*, ought to rejoyce our modern Doctors of Ignorance. Reading, if you believe him, is but an Amuſement, little better than Idleneſs itſelf, and like other Amuſements Men throw away their Time upon. That is to ſay, to employ our Time worthily, it ſhould be ſpent in Reflection, Meditation, Invention, or in Coffee-houſes; and when we read, it ſhould be only for Diverſion. This is a Taſte I don't much blame; but if our *Swiſs* be really as good a Philoſopher, as he would be thought, he would know, that a Man has not only need of amuſing himſelf with Books, but to employ much Pains and Labour

Labour in them; that Meditation ſuits with but few Perſons; that 'tis ridiculous to condemn different Taſtes. It is, indeed, very good, that there are Perſons Speculative, Contemplative, and Metaphyſical; but 'tis good, likewiſe, to have Men of Learning and Erudition, that have Skill in the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Tongues, that are Authors, Tranſlators, and Compilers, *&c.* That Ignorance is an Evil, at leaſt, to the Publick; and if the Study of Metaphyſicks is valuable, that of Metaphyſicks, Hiſtory, Law, and Polite Arts, is no leſs ſo, and much more ſuitable to the Generality of Mankind. I do not adviſe any one to *an inſatiate Deſire of reading*, as the Author calls it; but I would not diſſuade any from it. It is needleſs to preach up Idleneſs and Ignorance, to which we are, of our own Nature, ſufficiently inclined. I know a pretended fine Wit, a rough-hewn Philoſopher, who was complimented upon his Capacity; he was mightily offended at it; what is this, becauſe you take me for a Fool? It appears, that our Author was not far from making the ſame reply.

Let us return now with him to Travelling: One Advantage procured by it, which may be offered in its Favour, is, it procures us the Knowledge of Men of Merit all over the World; but, according to our Philoſopher, *a Man of Merit is inviſible:* Is it impoſſible to diſcern it; becauſe true Merit is not a Thing expoſed to view, or become viſible? What ſay you of this Notion? The Author, in my Opinion, had more Reaſon on his Side, when he pretends, that without Travelling we ſhould endeavour to diſcover, and that, perhaps, we might travel a long Time, e'er we found them; and that we ſhould never direct our Travelling, according to our Wants;

that thoſe who want Sedateneſs, ſhould go into *France*, or the heavy and dull, into *Holland*; like thoſe Merchants, who would ſeek for Wooll in *Italy*, or Silk in *England*. And that in Travelling, we read not the great Book of the World, to apply to ourſelves what may be ſuitable for us; but that we content ourſelves in turning over Prints, that is, of Buildings in Cities, Fortifications, Churches, Colleges, Libraries, Cabinets, Princes, *&c.* I confeſs all the Author ſays here, is very ingenious, and very ſolid. 'Tis for the Publick, adds he, that we travel, and it is the Publick that recompences us for it. This Reflection, and many others, are very juſt.

It is very pleaſant, to hear our *Swiſs* Philoſopher lament the Politeneſs that reigned, ſome Years ſince, in his own Country. The Morality one reads here is excellent. The Author of the *Fable of the Bees*, an *Engliſh* Poem, printed at *London*, ſome Years ago, hath quite different Principles; becauſe, he pretends that Luxury is very profitable to civil Society. Our *Swiſs*, on the contrary, regards it as a moſt pernicious Evil, eſpecially to the *Swiſs*. He affirms, that it is eſſential to them to be ſimple, and rough; and that when they aſſume the Manners of any other Nation, they become ridiculous. I very much doubt, that the thirteen worthy Cantons, know more of the Mind of the Author, their deſerving Compatriot, and the charitable Leſſons of his auſtere Philoſophy, than of the two Lines made upon them by a Modern:

Barbarians, who make a Trade of War;
And ſell their mercenary Blood for Pay.

Never-

Nevertheleſs, if we may believe the Author, Gallantry reigns very much among the *Swiſs*; but a Gallantry wholly Simple and Natural. The young People of both Sexes, have the Pleaſure of ſeeing themſelves always at their Eaſe, and paſs whole Days together. If the Women, as he aſſures us, have in *Switzerland* the Liberty of ſeeing the Men in private, it muſt be allowed, it is a Manner of Life a little contrary to good Senſe, and the Diſcretion we may ſuppoſe there; nor does he know how to juſtify it: But as it is true, at the ſame Time, that Libertiniſm and Debauchery do not reign among the *Swiſs*, I find that Cuſtom does honour to their Virtue, and recals the Innocence of the golden Age.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Fifteenth LETTER of the *SWISS* Gentleman, on the Subject of the *FRENCH Wit* in general.

SIR,

Had a Deſign to conſider particularly your Thoughts on the *French Wit*, which hath had the Misfortune to diſpleaſe you, and I ought to begin with that, becauſe the Criticiſm upon the ſixteenth Satyr of *Deſpreaux*, is a natural Conſequence of it: But I confeſs the many Things to be ſaid there, have ſomewhat diſcouraged me. 'Tis a great deal, and, perhaps, too much, to have made ſo tedious an Apology. However, I ſhall purſue my Deſign, and (tho' I diſoblige you by it) I believe, it will not be uſeleſs to ſay, at leaſt, a few Words, of your Syſtem of Philoſophy, which, at one Blow, fells down a good Part of the beſt Writers of the laſt Age. An Intereſt ſo dear, and the ingenious Singularity of your Manner of thinking, deſerve that we ſhould examine a little your Charge againſt them, before

fore we proceed to condemn the *Voitures*, the *Sarraſins*, and the *Balzacs* : What do I ſay? *Corneille*, *Racine*, *Moliere*, and *Boileau*.

Indeed, you do not refuſe to place thoſe great Authors on *Parnaſſus*; but, in recompence of this, you would baniſh from thence, for the future, all Men, and admit none there but Women. They, ſay you, ought to content themſelves with pure good Senſe, by Nature allotted them, and leave to the Female Sex the Graces of Wit, as an Appenage very ſuitable to the Charms Nature hath beſtowed upon them. Nothing can be more gallant; but that Gallantry joyned with very laboured Reaſons, tends to ſhew, that the *French* Genius is no more than a trifling Wit : For obſerve the Hinge, on which all his Reflections turn; and that is upon this Foundation, that the happieſt Productions of the great Men juſt now named, are no more in your Eyes, than mere Nothings, offenſive, or, at leaſt, unprofitable to a reaſonable Man. What, thoſe charming Tragedies! thoſe inimitable Comedies! thoſe divine Writings! Yes, nothing is excepted, but *Telemachus*, *Bruyere*'s Characters, and Mr. *Rochefoucault*'s Reflections. 'Tis with Difficulty you ſhew Favour to the Fables of *Fontaine*, and a little Work of an illuſtrious Modern ſtill in being, and whom you do not name; and then you add, they do well to ſupport themſelves on the Wings of others, to ſoar aloft. As to *Rabelais* and *Bayle*, you have advantageouſly attacked them; and no one will undertake their Defence, with reſpect to that irregularity of Spirit, and Heart, you juſtly reproach them with. Their Talents will not clear them from their Abuſe of them.

But

But can no Indulgence, Sir, be granted to others? And muſt we be reduced to confeſs, that the Spirit of trifling hath ſo far infatuated the *French* Nation, that ſhe hath proſtituted her Eſteem to Writers, by no Means deſerving of it? This would be very ſtrange: Let us ſee your Reaſons. And, firſt, Wit is no more than a delicate good Senſe; good Senſe produces the *Good*, and Wit begets the *Fine Senſe*. The *Good* can ſubſiſt without the *Fine*, but the *Fine*, ſeparated from the *Good*, is not worth our Search after. Secondly, They that ſet themſelves to write, have no other View than Relations, or Things in themſelves, or Things with Man, to whom every Thing ought to relate. This ſecond Sort of Relations, is that alone, in which we are intereſted, and the firſt ſerves only to ſecond the other. This I take to be the Subſtance of your Reaſonings.

According to this Manner of philoſophizing, you preſently proſcribe *Voiture*, *Sarraſin*, and *Balzac*. Theſe Authors, ſay you, have imagined new Relations, and theſe Relations reſpect only the leiſurable Man. They make it eſſential to Agreeableneſs, to neglect the good, a Thing ſo blameable in your Eyes, that you think they ſhould be taken off, by dragging away their Perſons, like Children that play not their Parts well with other Children, and regarding their Works, as a ſweet Pye, that hath no ſolid Meat in it.

It is certainly much better to employ the Mind about ſerious Objects, than mere Trifles; this is evidently what you would ſay, and herein we do not diſagree: But if rational Men, and Philoſophers themſelves, muſt have ſometimes Amuſements, can one blame the Authors in

in Queſtion, for having procured them ſome ſo very elegant? See then their Character is cleared; they are not too culpable of imagining Relations that reſpect Men at Leiſure, that is, a Man who ſeeks his Diverſion; much leſs are they to be condemned, as Men *that have Wickedneſs in their Heart, make a Sport of Friendſhip*, and who have *reverſed the very Order of Nature*. With reſpect to their Manner of Writing, which you compare to Sweet-meats put into Pyes, we know well enough their Nouriſhment is not very ſolid; nor is that what they pretend to, in a Deſign of diverting, and amuſing the Mind. What was more nouriſhing had been rejected. It is with thoſe Writings, as with Converſation, where Trifles are often pleaſing, as Mr. *Fontenelle* ſays very elegantly to Madam *de la Saſliere*.

In ſome other Converſation, I will gratify you, as to this Point, at your own Houſe; Converſation is an agreeable Commerce, where Chance furniſhes a hundred different Matters, even as in common Diſcourſe, which runs partly upon Trifles; the World will believe nothing of this, let us then lay aſide the World, and its Belief. Trifling, Silence, Chimera's, even Nothing; all is good. I maintain, that all theſe muſt contribute to entertain us. It is a Parterre, where *Flora* ſpreads out all her Dainties; the *Bee* lights on many different Flowers, and extracts Honey from every one of them.

When a Man wraps himſelf up in his Philoſopher's Mantle, ſurely one cannot then find an elegant Trifle, unbecoming a virtuous Man; yet I know not if ever a Philoſopher baniſhed any ſo rigidly, as he hath *Voiture* and *Sarraſin*. *Plato* himſelf might have conſented to pardon them. He ſhould have had ſome other Thing

to reprehend in their Writings, and you have ſaid ſomething of it, with reſpect to *Voiture*; but this is not the Queſtion, nor would it degrade him into the Rank where he puts him, *viz.* that of *King of Trifles.* To guard this kind of Authors againſt a Cenſure ſo very ſevere, it is ſufficient that what *Horace* ſays, is true, *Dulce eſt deſipere in loco.*

Whilſt you was thus got among the *French* Poets, *Corneille, Racine,* and *Moliere,* unhappily preſent themſelves to you; the Solidity of their Works, it ſeems, put them under the Shelter of Criticiſm. Thus you acknowledge them as Maſters of the Drama; but the Stage does not pleaſe you, and it is in condemning dramatick Writing, that you put them in the ſame Rank with *Voiture, Sarraſin,* and *Balzac.* I would ſay, the Compoſers of Trifles. It is with reſpect to publick Shows, you would be preciſely underſtood; but the Reproach, by a Counter-Blow, falls on thoſe that have taken Pains to make them profitable.

The End of dramatick Writing, you ſay, is only to give us Pleaſure. If one ſhould grant this, which would be to degrade the Theatre, and contradict almoſt all the Maſters of the Art; it would not follow from thence, that a good Tragedy, or Comedy, with an uſeful Moral, far from drawing Men to Virtue, makes a Sport of Virtue itſelf, and is an Amuſement proper to render it purely Theatrical, as you pretend. It is, doubtleſs, by a refined Reaſoning, you believe Virtue debaſed, by being applauded in dramatick Writings. The Poets, according to you, ſhew it at a Diſtance, and ſo diſguis'd, that they diſpenſe with Men from the Practice of it. They make only a pompous

Shew

Shew of it; and the Spectators, on their Side, contented with applauding, or being affected by it, think they may quit themſelves of it, for that barren and ſuperficial Homage they pay to Virtue, without its entring the leaſt into their Heart. Here you have your Objection in its full Force.

It is true, that in thoſe Entertainments, and in many Books of Morality, Virtue is made only a Piece of Wit: But why then do Men abuſe it? Upon this foot, they ſhould burn their moſt excellent Books, even thoſe that deſcribe Virtue, juſt as you would have it: For the Generality of Readers, pleaſed with having found out fine Things, are commonly very little the better for them. It is not then ſurprizing, that little Advantage is made of the moſt uſeful Plays; but if no further Uſe is made of them, they ſerve to ſoften the Manners, inſtil ſound Maxims beyond all Contradiction, and ſo fill the Minds of Men with noble and generous Sentiments, which is always one Way by which Virtue enters into the Soul. If ſome Poems carry it to an extraordinary Sphere, it is the Fault of the Poets, and not of Tragedy itſelf. Beſides, the Painting muſt be well drawn, before it can have its intended Effect.

Your Reproaches, againſt Tragedy in general, have very little Foundation to rely on. As to its Effect, it ſerves further to maintain the Sentiments of Humanity, and an Eſteem for Order in the Soul of Man: This is a conſiderable Prerogative it has over the Heart, and is capable of producing valuable Effects.

It belongs not to me to juſtify thoſe Plays, that are blameable in many Places; this is not my Deſign. I know I can employ my Time much

better, than to frequent the Theatre, and if you mean no more than that, we are agreed; but to carry your Cenſure ſo far, as to condemn, without any Appeal, this kind of Writing, as contrary to Virtue, by the very Care is taken to give it a Luſtre; is not this, Sir, in good Earneſt, to carry Philoſophy too far? Let us condemn, together, that Abuſe of dramatick Writings the Poets commit, in making Love their *Primum Mobile.* We ſhall be now on equal Terms; the antient dramatick Writers will ſerve, by their Example, to baniſh this Depravation off the Stage, and particularly in Tragedy. As to the reſt, it is to attack the moſt noble Efforts of human Wit, to place in the Number of Trifles the happieſt Productions of it, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they are *French.* This is, I think, the only ſecret Reaſon, that could arm your Zeal againſt *Corneille*, *Racine*, and *Moliere.*

I ſay no more of *Boileau.* There is ſome Truth in the Character you draw of him, and always ſome Exceſs; eſpecially when you ſay, *He is as much below the Excellent, where the common Voice places him, as above the Mean, which he ſucceſsfully attacks in his Satyrs.* This is the Remains of the Ill-Humour you contracted againſt his ſixteenth Satyr. It would ſtill be too hard, to ſubſcribe the *French* Authors to that too general a Criticiſm, *viz.* That a Deſire to pleaſe the Publick, which they idolize, weakens their Genius, or ſhews the Weakneſs of it; whereas a Genius truly grand, intends to give Laws to the Publick, and not receive them from it. In ſhort, as to what relates to *Scarron*, an Original as he was in his kind, we can give him up to you without Pain; but he himſelf has firſt done himſelf juſtice.

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